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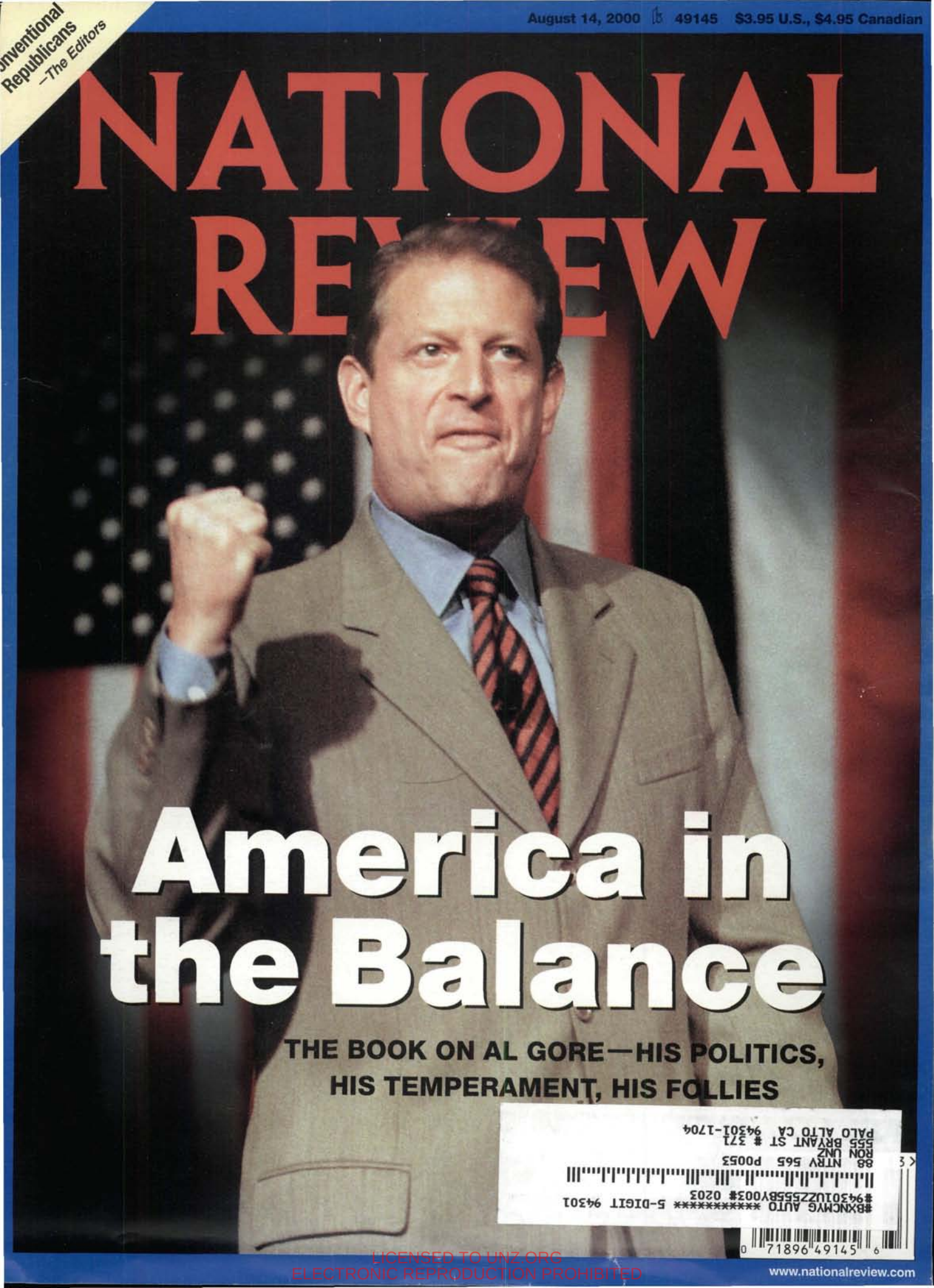

America in the Balance

THE BOOK ON AL GORE—HIS POLITICS, HIS TEMPERAMENT, HIS FOLLIES

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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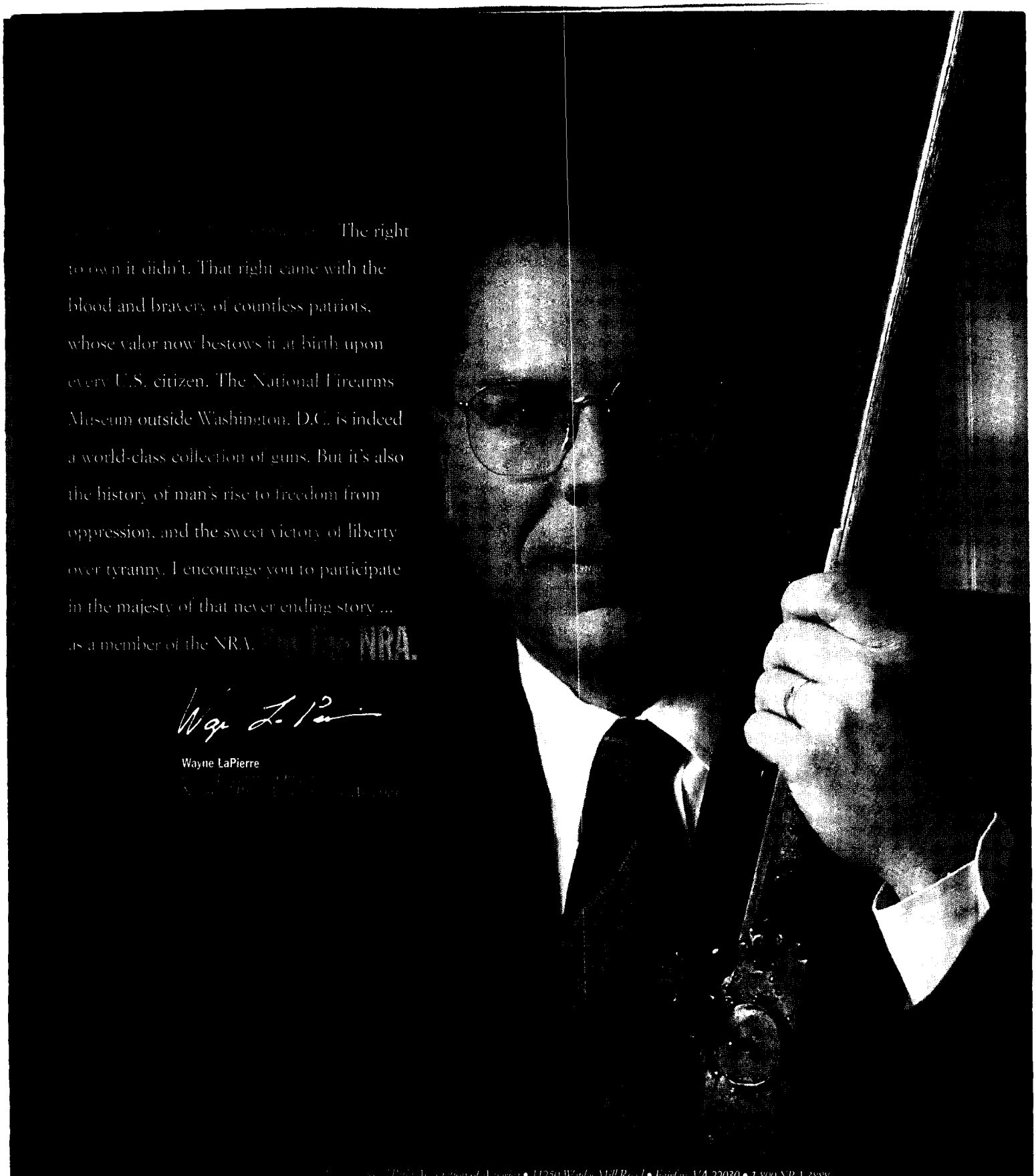

The right to own it didn't. That right came with the blood and bravery of countless patriots, whose valor now bestows it at birth upon every U.S. citizen. The National Firearms Museum outside Washington, D.C. is indeed a world-class collection of guns. But it's also the history of man's rise to freedom from oppression, and the sweet victory of liberty over tyranny. I encourage you to participate in the majesty of that never ending story ... as a member of the NRA.

NRA.

Wayne LaPierre

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Charlton Heston, NRA President

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■ LETTERS ■

SUPREMELY MISTAKEN

In light of a few recent Supreme Court rulings ("The Week," July 17), I would propose that we add a few words to the First Amendment. It should read, "Congress *and* the Supreme Court shall make no law . . . prohibiting the free exercise of religion." Or perhaps the addition should read, "The Supreme Court shall make no law, period." One wonders when the justices will stop acting like legislators and start thinking like judges.

Brian Shepson
Sacramento, Calif.

BOB JONES U.

In his article "Most Hated U." (July 17), Jay Nordlinger quotes a Bob Jones University spokesman, Jonathan Pait, as saying: "We don't seek dialogue, we don't seek common ground, we don't make concessions. We stand firm on what we believe."

Now, the words of Evelyn Waugh (Catholic) in a letter dated September 7, 1963: "Instead of dialogue with separated brethren why do we not revert to the old-fashioned effort to convert?"

How long has it been since we have heard plain talk like this? God bless both Pait and Waugh.

Sharon O'Connor
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

DOUBLE TROUBLE

Bravo for exposing the sloppy reporting and ideological mischief of "*Time*'s Terrible Two," Donald Barlett and James Steele (by Ramesh Ponnuru, July 17). Rather than discuss the merits of the pending bankruptcy-reform bill, Barlett and Steele hitch the issue to their campaign-finance-reform medicine show. Truth and accuracy as to the actual provisions of the bankruptcy-reform bill were a necessary casualty to the greater cause of campaign-finance reform. Indeed, Barlett and Steele went so far as to invent nonexistent legislative provisions to distort the truth about bankruptcy reform. The reality, as Ponnuru notes, is that this bill will bring balance to the preposterous system of no-fault bankruptcy that mocks hard-working, financially responsible Americans. It is this balance that explains the overwhelming bipartisan support for the bill on Capitol Hill and among the public at large.

It makes you wonder: What other truths will have to be sacrificed on the altar of the campaign-finance-reform crusade?

Todd Zywicki
Arlington, Va.

FONDA'S 'APOLOGY'

It seems to me that no retrospective of Jane Fonda is complete without first addressing the question, Why has there been no indictment for treason? ("The Bane that is Jane," by Peter Collier, July 17). My copy of the Constitution defines treason as ". . . adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort." Perhaps going to the land of an enemy, participating in their propaganda activities during a time of war, and giving verbal and emotional support to their efforts to kill our soldiers and defeat our country does not fit this definition. Perhaps she did none of these things. But perhaps that ought to be settled in a court.

Donn Shankland
Seattle, Wash.

GUMBEL-FREE MORNINGS

Jonah Goldberg's "Biased Gumbel" (July 31) is, quite simply, suitable for framing. Although my TV remains off in the morning, henceforth I shall refrain from perusing the local fish wrap before at least two NR mugs of coffee. And Goldberg's description of Gumbel as "the master chef of *petit déjeuner* liberalism"—more delectable than Eggs Benedict!

William J. Garrity
Charlotte, N.C.

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Taking Medical Progress for Granted?

by Robert Goldberg

Have we all become unwitting enemies of medical progress? We may be, if our political debate over the future of healthcare leads to diminished investment in the most hopeful areas of research and innovation.

At the moment, ironically, this is a particular danger in the US, where the benefits of medical progress are demonstrable and measurable. The internet, magazines and television are full of news about how genetic discoveries will yield drugs and diagnostic tests for the most incurable illnesses, free of side effects, and personalised to our individual body chemistry and family history in ways that will prevent or control disease before it begins. Cancer vaccines are in the works. Irreversible diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's may be controlled as chronic illnesses. Other research will lead us to simple and cheap shifts in diet and lifestyle that will complement or perhaps surpass the work of medications. And yet, in the current political season, proposals to force pharmaceutical companies – which provide the bulk of research funding for such progress – to cut their prices seem to command substantial public support.

How is this possible? The answer is, most Americans – and I dare say most people in the developed world – take medical progress for granted, as an entitlement, without considering that only continued spending and investment will make further progress possible. The returns on this investment promise to be substantial, both in social and economic terms. A recent study by Columbia University Professor Frank Lichtenberg has found that a one-time pharmaceutical R&D expenditure of about $15 billion subsequently saves 1.6 million life-years per year (conservatively, worth about $27 billion). Lichtenberg found that for every dollar spent on new drugs, the US saves nearly four dollars on physicians and hospitalisations. Currently, Lichtenberg and I are updating this research to focus on one amazing shift: the growing number of older people in America who are spending their time working and managing stock portfolios, instead of languishing in hospitals and nursing homes. We see this trend – of longer, more active and more productive lives – continuing over the next decade largely because of the introduction of medical innovations.

> ***We are in danger of freezing medical progress in amber at the very moment when it is at its most promising.***

It is clearly time that we begin to look at medical progress, not as a cost to be capped or rationed, but as an investment – one we should manage in order to accumulate the maximum amount of "health capital," which Harvard University economist David Cutler defines as "the dollar value of health a person will have over the course of their remaining life." Cutler measures health capital empirically using data on the length of life, the prevalence of medical conditions for those alive, and the quality of life conditional on having an illness condition. For an American new-born in 1990, Cutler estimates health capital at about $3 million, while for the elderly, health capital is nearly $1 million. Health capital has increased greatly over time by roughly $40,000 to $50,000 per decade.

Cutler has found that, in comparing the change in health capital with the increase in medical spending, medical technology has been worth its cost. In fact, under the most conservative assumptions, the US would have needed only about 30 percent of the improvement in health capital that it received in the past 40 years to justify the investment in medical progress over that period in time.

As Professor Cutler has suggested, the time has come for a fundamental repositioning of the public debate about medical spending. Traditionally, the debate has focused on this question: how can society (or government) limit medical costs so that we can afford healthcare in the future on our current budget? A more appropriate question is: how can we spend more on medical technologies that are valuable and productive, while avoiding unproductive spending?

If we do not begin to frame the debate on medical spending in those terms, we are in danger of freezing medical progress in amber at the very moment when it is at its most promising. The idea that we could calmly erect a barrier between people with chronic and fatal illnesses, and the possibility of access to cures, seems chilling. We have reached this state of affairs not because of technological limits, but due to political limits – our fear of discarding old systems of organising and financing healthcare, despite their unsuitability for the new era of rapid and continuous innovation. But the findings I cite above should give us the courage to consider new ways of thinking about healthcare, and paying for healthcare, because they suggest that medical breakthroughs are far from incompatible with affordable, universal access to healthcare. Instead, the two must go hand in hand.

Robert Goldberg is Senior Research Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center (EPPC) in Washington, D.C. with its Program on Medical Science and Society. His most recent publication, Is a Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Hazardous To Your Health?, is available from EPPC at www.eppc.org or by calling +202-682-1200.

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■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ President **Clinton** issues new executive order on federal intern program: "The purpose of the program is to attract exceptional men and women to the federal work force who have diverse professional experiences, academic training, and competencies." . . . White House spokesman **Joe Lockhart** on Clinton's reaction to anti-Semitism allegation against **Hillary**: "Obviously, the president probably has more experience than any living human being about how deep in the gutter some people can go." . . . Vice President **Gore**, on *Meet the Press*: "I think that it's likely that history will judge [Clinton] to have been a great president." . . . **Newt Gingrich**, on *Today*, says Clinton should not be indicted after he leaves office. . . . In Mason-Dixon poll, Arkansas voters favor Clinton disbarment, 47 percent to 42 percent.

■ Candidates believed to remain on Gore's veep list: Sen. **Evan Bayh** (Ind.), Sen. **Dick Durbin** (Ill.), Sen. **Bob Graham** (Fla.), Gov. **Jim Hunt** (N.C.), Sen. **John Kerry** (Mass.), Sen. **Joe Lieberman** (Conn.), former Sen. **George Mitchell** (Me.), and Maryland lieutenant governor **Kathleen Kennedy Townsend**. . . . Clinton favors Graham or Mitchell, according to *New York Times*. . . . House Minority Leader **Dick Gephardt**, on speculation Gore wants him as running mate: "I've said I don't want to do that. And I've said I hope and believe they'll find someone to do that other than me." . . . Gore says health care in Texas is so bad, many families go "across the border to Mexico to try to find health care." . . . **George W. Bush**, on how Gore will be treated at Republican convention, on CNN: "He will be spared, . . . [but] I may needle him a bit." . . . Bush, on Gore, **Dan Quayle**, and **Walter Mondale**: "All of them have been very good vice presidents." . . . Bush adviser **Stuart Stevens**, on Gore's media team, in *Washington Post*: "They scanned the horizon and came up with the guys who are probably the best at negative advertising." . . . Bush campaign runs ads in Florida, with some believing move is preemptive bid to keep Graham off Gore's ticket. Florida attorney general **Bob Butterworth** (D.), in *Orlando Sentinel*: "The Republican spin is that they're not in trouble here, but why else would you put a million dollars into a safe state?" . . . **Pat Buchanan**, on the Republican convention: "It will be a lot more boring without Pat Buchanan. Even they would agree with that."

■ In *Roll Call*, **Stuart Rothenberg** identifies 13 most vulnerable open House seats. Republicans hold 9 of them. . . . Rep. **Patrick Kennedy** (D., R.I.), in new biography by **Darrell M. West**: Democrats "don't need to win the middle in order to capture the House" this fall. . . . Rep. **Loretta Sanchez** plans Democratic event at Playboy Mansion during party convention. . . . Rep. **Bob Weygand** (D.) wins Rhode Island Right to Life endorsement for Senate race. . . .

"If everything's so darn equal these days, how come there aren't any Boy Scout cookies?"

With death of Sen. **Paul Coverdell** (R., Ga.), says **Jennifer E. Duffy** of *Cook Political Report*, odds of Democrats gaining control of Senate increases from 10 percent to "maybe 25 percent." . . . At end of June, Hillary Clinton had just under $7 million in bank for New York Senate race, and Rep. **Rick Lazio** (R.) had $6.2 million. . . . Sen. **Rick Santorum** (R., Pa.) had $4.4 million, compared to less than $600,000 for challenger Rep. **Ron Klink**. . . . **George Voinovich** (Ohio), alone among Senate Republicans, votes against marriage-tax relief. . . . **Maureen Reagan**, on her father's Alzheimer's disease, on CNN: "He makes it very easy for us. He goes for walks and does all the things that we encourage him to do. But the disease just gets worse every day. And it is just that it never gets better."

■ In *USA Today*/CNN poll, 53 percent support building missile defense—showing no erosion of support after July test failure. . . . In Fabrizio/McLaughlin poll, 73 percent say NAACP should lift boycott of South Carolina, now that Confederate flag no longer flies over capitol dome. . . . In ABCNews.com poll, 66 percent of whites say federal government should "apologize to black Americans for the slavery that once existed in this country," versus only 38 percent of blacks. . . . General Motors files court papers in defense of racial preferences at University of Michigan. . . . Florida court bars anti–racial-preference initiatives offered by **Ward Connerly**. . . . Colorado court blocks anti–bilingual-education initiative sponsored by **Linda Chavez**. . . . D.C. appeals court vindicates National Policy Forum and Republican National Committee on election-law-violation charges. . . . **Mortimer J. Adler**, prolific author, teacher, philosopher, quietly converts to the Roman Catholic faith in San Jose, Calif., in December, at age 97.

■ Russian president **Vladimir Putin** plans to send emissaries to GOP convention in Philadelphia, with trip organized by Rep. **Curt Weldon** (R., Pa.), reports Associated Press. . . . Cuban dictator **Fidel Castro**: "Christ chose the fishermen because he was a Communist." Adds Castro's brother, **Raul**: "I think that's why they killed Jesus, for being a Communist, for doing what Fidel defined as revolution." . . . North Korea reportedly offers to abandon missile program in exchange for access to space-rocket technology. . . . In Zogby poll, 66 percent of Americans say they support Palestinian statehood—up from 41 percent two years ago. . . . British Columbia film board declares "Soldier of Fortune" computer game to be an "adult film," meaning minors can't play it.

■ **Jay Leno**: "Al Gore said today, 'It's time for Congress to wake up and smell the coffee!' See, that's a common theme with Al Gore's speeches: 'Wake up!'" **NR**

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THE WEEK

■ "It is conceivable," said New York governor George Pataki, signing a hate-crimes bill into law, "that if this law had been in effect one hundred years ago, the greatest hate crime of all, the Holocaust, could have been avoided." If we had passed a stupid-politicians law, could George Pataki have been avoided?

■ George W. Bush's selection of former defense secretary Dick Cheney as a running mate was a PR coup: Reporters were surprised, conservatives pleased, the public reassured. Cheney was one of President Reagan's top lieutenants in the House, a reliably conservative vote on economics, morals, and defense. He would undoubtedly make a good vice president. Lynne Cheney, meanwhile, is a conservative intellectual who makes us wish there were a vice-presidential-wives' debate. Cheney was a great pick, then, for his impact in late July and possibly after next January. His impact on the election in between is less predictable. He hails from no battleground state, appeals to no distinctive constituency. Bush hopes to get credit for choosing the best vice president rather than the best vice-presidential candidate. He certainly deserves it.

■ Congressman Charles Canady, the Florida Republican, has introduced a bill to extend legal protections to infants who survive abortions. The courts' abortion jurisprudence makes their status unclear at present. The abortion lobby is split on the bill. Jerrold Nadler, a stalwart pro-abortion Democrat from New York, seemed during hearings on the bill to suggest to his allies that they should not oppose it vigorously. He argued that existing law already protected abortion survivors: It is illegal to shoot a baby, he said, even one delivered at three months, and nobody would argue otherwise. Oh, really? The National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League has come out swinging; it will not permit any acknowledgment whatsoever that a fetus before "viability" (whatever that means) has any standing in the law. Killing such a baby is a "personal and private decision about medical treatment." NARAL's grotesque consistency is matched by that of Al Gore, who was asked whether he would support the execution of a pregnant criminal. He initially declined to answer, then said it would be up to the woman. Gore is saying that a woman on Death Row may exercise her right to abortion by refusing a delay of execution offered by the state. It is an astonishing conclusion—one quickly repudiated by Republicans and Democrats in the House, who voted 417–0 to exempt pregnant women from the death penalty. But Gore and NARAL should be commended for letting voters know what they accept when they accept a private right to kill.

■ A new book about the Clintons' marriage says that Hillary Clinton called her husband's campaign manager a "f****** J** b******" after Bill's unsuccessful run for Congress in 1974. Did she? Didn't she? New York is in the throes of election-year ethnic political correctness (during the 1992 Senate race, Al D'Amato accused an opponent of being anti-Italian for calling him a fascist). The problem with such ritualized brouhahas is that they obscure real problems: Mrs. Clinton is a control freak with a room-temperature boiling point; she has been a point woman for her husband's pro-Palestinian diplomacy (she floated talk of a Palestinian state years ago). New York journalists—and Rick Lazio—should ask her whether she supports President Clinton's reckless Camp David diplomacy, not what she may have said in one of her frequent moments of anger.

■ Speaking to the NAACP, Al Gore attempted (sigh) a joke about Charlton Heston: "If I remember my Bible correctly, the last time Moses listened to a bush, his people wandered in the desert for forty years." But in Exodus, it is God speaking through the Burning Bush, choosing Moses to lead His people to the Law and the Promised Land. Gore attended divinity school at Vanderbilt. Has anyone seen his grades there?

■ Former senator John Danforth's investigation of Waco concluded that the final disastrous fire was set by Branch Davidian leader David Koresh, not by recklessly fired pyrotechnic shells; it also absolved the FBI of shooting at the Davidians as agents made their final push into the compound. This is welcome news, at least to those uncomfortable with the notion that the federal government wantonly murders Americans. Danforth's assignment, however, was a limited one: deciding whether the government engaged in "bad acts," not "bad judgment." The federal government seems clearly guilty of the latter. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, looking for a splashy bust to guarantee refunding, staged a reckless initial raid that left four ATF agents dead, and brought in the FBI; Janet Reno, driven by a compulsion to ferret out and prevent child abuse, conducted the ensuing siege with a minimum of finesse. David Koresh led an apocalyptic offshoot of Jehovah's Witnesses: Did anyone think to study his creed, in order to predict his actions? Would ringing his redoubt with centurions make such a man more or less likely to torch himself and his remnant? In the Clinton era, we may feel fortunate when officers of the law are not criminals. In the future, there should be a higher standard.

■ A jury in a class-action lawsuit by Florida smokers ordered the five leading tobacco companies to pay $145 billion in

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punitive damages, the largest product-liability award in history. Philip Morris attorneys responded calmly, saying the verdict would "have no practical impact" since they would win on appeal. That the industry can appeal at all is a gift from the Florida legislature—which changed the rules of appeal out of fear that a bankrupt industry would not be able to pay the state $13 billion over 25 years, as Big Tobacco had agreed in settling the state's own lawsuit. There is a neat symmetry here: The settlement itself came after the legislature rigged that case by stripping the industry of its strongest defenses. As a result of these legal maneuverings and other policies, both the federal and state governments now profit more from tobacco sales than the tobacco companies themselves. And politicians who rail against Big Tobacco increasingly resemble the unkempt men who wander the streets of New York, engaged in never-ending arguments with themselves.

■ U.S. district judge Charles Breyer, reversing a two-year-old decision, allowed a cannabis buyers' club in Oakland, Calif., to sell marijuana to sick people with serious medical conditions and no reasonable alternative treatment. A wise decision; it could help Peter McWilliams (see "The Week" and "On the Right," July 17), if he lived in Oakland, if he still lived.

■ When Raynard Johnson, a black 17-year-old, was found hanging from a tree in his Mississippi front yard, his parents declared that he had been lynched. Janet Reno called in the FBI; Jesse Jackson led a march; Al Sharpton put in his no cents. Soon details emerged that undermined the lynching story. There were no marks of struggle on Johnson's body; he had just broken up with his girlfriend. Police wanted to inspect his computer for possible suicide notes—suicide is the most common cause of death for teenagers and young adults—but the parents wouldn't let them. There is a bogus hate-crimes industry in this country (remember the "epidemic" of black-church burnings, which turned out to be random arson). Who profits from a made-up lynching? Grieving parents who are unwilling to face the truth; race men, like Jackson and Sharpton, whose daily bread comes from causing turmoil; scoundrelly white politicians, like the Clinton administration, who gain votes by exploiting it. At least the Johnsons, in their distress, have some excuse. The Jacksons and the Renos of this world act as coolly as a vet putting down a dog.

■ The good news is that the FBI sprang into rapid action when security lapses at the nation's nuclear labs were pointed out. The bad news is that the agency targeted the man who pointed them out. In NR's last issue, Notra Trulock detailed the administration's mishandling of security at the labs. Immediately after publication, the FBI showed up at his house to confiscate his computer hard drive. The FBI maintains it was reacting to a CIA tip that a much longer version of the article—privately circulated by Trulock months earlier—possibly contained classified material. Trulock finds the timing suspicious. About a week earlier, he had been dismissed from his job with a defense contractor. He says that a company official told him that the Department of Energy had pressured the firm to fire him. At least the Clinton administration appears to be eternally vigilant—in harassing its critics.

Washington, the State

To blow the dams and save the fish
As brownouts cast a pall,
Or keep the dams inviolate
And shop a lighted mall?
With Nader nagging on his left
To save the salmon, Al
Squirms like a spawning sockeye but
Stays mum as Silent Cal.

—W. H. von Dreele

■ There are, said Bismarck, two things that no person of sensitivity should have to watch being made: sausages, and laws. To that, in this age of the omnipresent camcorder, you can add: arrests. The less photogenic side of police work was on display again recently in Philadelphia when a dozen officers beat the bejesus out of a perp directly below a helicopter-borne TV crew. The perp, it turned out, had hijacked a car, led police on a high-speed chase through crowded streets, crashed the car, stolen a police cruiser, and initiated another chase before at last being stopped. He had a long rap sheet: burglary, theft, assault. He was black, but the customary howls of "racism" were muted by the fact that several of the cops were, too. Criminal-justice professor and former cop Gene O'Donnell provided a rare voice of good sense amidst all the harrumphing and hand-wringing: "Police work is brutal, and nobody wants to own up to that."

■ The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals was expanded in 1990, but the extra judgeship created then has never been filled. The circuit is doing its business expeditiously without it, and its chief judge, J. Harvie Wilkinson III, has written that he opposes "unnecessary judgeship growth." On June 30, however, President Clinton nominated Roger Gregory to the seat. Within two weeks, Clinton was complaining that Senate Republicans were holding up the nomination because Gregory is black. (Never mind that it took Clinton *seven years* to come up with a nominee.) The accusation drew a strong response from Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, who pointed out that Senate Republicans had confirmed roughly the same percentage of white and minority nominees. Said Hatch, "I call on President Clinton and Al Gore to put an end to this game of race-baiting politics." Don't count on it—the Democrats are going to keep playing the race card, whether or not Gregory is confirmed. All the more reason not to confirm him.

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of the Mexican Elections

Vicente Fox's 6.4-point margin of victory over Francisco Labastida on Sunday, July 2, not only ended the reign of the world's longest-ruling party but was the first time in Mexican history that power has passed from one government to another peacefully and democratically.

The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) held power for seventy years on the basis of vote-buying, control over the news media, intimidation, and outright fraud. The party allowed rival parties to gain seats in Congress to maintain a facade of democracy, but it always sustained overwhelming majorities. The PRI's "perfect dictatorship" ensured stability by allowing outgoing presidents to handpick their successors and then forcing them to retire from the political scene.

The PRI finally lost power in the 1990s because of three fundamental changes in Mexico. First, the PRI lost the ability to produce economic growth. Since 1982 Mexican average incomes have been flat. Second, the attempt by President Carlos Salinas to reverse economic decline by opening up the economy weakened the party's political control. NAFTA, for example, created a new class of businesspeople dependent not on the state's favors but on their ability to compete internationally. Third, a wave of assassinations prompted by infighting within the PRI and the outbreak of the insurgency in Chiapas led many Mexicans to see the PRI as a source of disorder and violence.

In addition to changing the governing party, Fox's landslide severely weakens the power of the Mexican president. On paper, Mexico's Constitution resembles the checks and balances of the United States, but its one-party rule gave the president unquestioned authority and discretion. President Fox, however, will have to negotiate initiatives with a freely elected Congress, meaning that future agreements between Mexico and the United States will have to navigate an open political process on both sides of the border.

The Fox victory may also mean the end of the PRI as an influential political party. One reason that the PRI dominated Mexican politics for so long was that it controlled a huge patronage machine, at the center of which sat the president. With the presidency now at the hands of another party, using the federal treasury to reward political allies will be impossible. The end result may be a multiparty system in which the PRI is not a major player.

Finally, **the Fox landslide has the potential to bring effective government to Mexico.** Over the past decade, Fox's party (the PAN) won a number of governorships in northern Mexico. The federal government responded by cutting federal aid to those states. PAN governors, such as Vicente Fox in the state of Guanajuato, were therefore forced to eliminate large swathes of bureaucracy. The end result was an improved level of public service at lower cost. These states have also made headway in reducing the corruption endemic to nearly all transactions between Mexican citizens and state officials. Voters noticed and gave the PAN the chance to do the same at the federal level. The challenge is to meet their expectations.

— Stephen Haber

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CONSERVATIVE NEWS AND INFORMATION

■ Newt Gingrich, interviewed on the *Today* show, expounded an odd doctrine: that the House was right to impeach Bill Clinton, but the Senate was also right not to convict him. "I think the president did something terribly wrong because he lied under oath, he committed perjury. On the other hand, it was clear that the country had reached the conclusion that while it was an offense, and they were offended, it was not legitimate to deprive him of the office he'd won in 1996." These are statements not reconcilable by the tepid formulation, "on the other hand." If removing Clinton from office was "not legitimate"—i.e., illegal—then the House, of which Gingrich was Speaker, was wrong to put him at risk of being removed. If Clinton had done something "terribly wrong"—striking at the legal system by perjuring himself—then the Senate was wrong to let him off. Former professor Gingrich has always had a great interest in history, but as he well knows, no historian calls every event right.

■ Eager to preserve its bit of the balance of terror, China joined the Russians in denouncing U.S. plans to build missile defenses. If Russia can threaten to obliterate all of the United States, why shouldn't China at least get Hawaii and Los Angeles? After a stop in Beijing to express this mutual admiration for Mutual Assured Destruction, Russian president Vladimir Putin jetted to Pyongyang, where he extracted an offer from the North Koreans to halt development of their "space" (i.e., ballistic-missile) program if the world provides them with rocket boosters. For the Russians and Chinese, this proposal has the advantage of continuity, since they already are sending all sorts of missile technology to "states of concern." It is also unassailable from a North Korean perspective: Why develop your own missiles if you can get the boosters for free? (Call it rogue-state welfare.) To all this Putin-inspired nonsense, the United States should have a simple counteroffer: If the world provides us with effective missile interceptors, we'll halt development of our indigenous missile-defense system immediately.

■ At the recent G-8 meeting in Okinawa, Bill Clinton was one of the few heads of state not contemplating major tax cuts. Japan has already implemented a Reagan-style fiscal package, and an economic recovery is gradually taking hold. In the run-up to next year's Canadian elections, both the Liberal party and the Canada Alliance party are offering tax-cut programs. Even Russia's Putin is pressing for a 13 percent flat tax. The latest to join the bandwagon: German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, a Social Democrat, who is cutting tax rates substantially for both individuals and corporations. The tax cuts will not only increase Germany's currently anemic growth rate, but may spur like-minded reform in France, Italy, and the Netherlands. Al Gore must be scandalized: All over the world, countries have embarked on risky schemes.

■ In June, Cuban baseball player Andy Morales attempted to flee to America but was stopped at sea by the Coast Guard. Under the current "wet foot, dry foot" policy, he was returned

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to Cuba, where the government set about wrecking his life: denigrating his skills in the official press and assigning squads of secret policemen to follow him around. Somehow Morales eluded his watchers long enough to get aboard another ship, and this time he made it to land. Arriving in Miami, he kissed the ground. Fidel Castro's cheering section in the U.S. media, accustomed to bestowing their own kisses elsewhere, gave him a grudging welcome—the egregious Douglas Montero of the *New York Post* blaming "asinine politics" for the dilemmas faced by refugees such as Morales, whose wife and baby remain in Cuba. Which political system, we should like to ask Mr. Montero, is the one run by asses—the one that attracts, cherishes, nurtures, and enriches talents like Andy Morales, or the one that drives them out?

■ One of the more irritating campaigns in the world is that to get English-speaking nations to adopt the metric system. Instead of familiar, sensible units based on the length of our thumbs and feet, we are being pressed to take up the brainchild of a committee of French intellectuals: millimeters and grams that are too small for everyday use, meters and kilos that are too large. (It is not, as commonly thought, Napoleon's fault; he hated the system and thought it "contrary to the organization of the mind, of the memory, and of the imagination.") Now a blow has been struck for sanity by Tesco, one of the largest supermarket chains in Britain. On July 17, Tesco announced that they would return to selling food in pounds and ounces after a survey revealed that few British shoppers understood metric measures. This after 30 years of steady indoctrination, endless public-service announcements, the retraining of teachers and the conversion of school textbooks, and, of course, an infinity of directives and regulations from the European Union bureaucracy. The United States meanwhile has at least one good psychological defense against this creeping menace: Most Americans associate grams and kilos with drug dealing.

■ Anyone with an urge to become a press baron might consider buying *L'Unità*, the paper of the Italian Communist party since 1924. Losing almost a million dollars a month and its readership down to nothing, it has called in the receivers; but political bankruptcy has already assured it a noteworthy place in history. This is the paper that crafted the line that things went wrong in the Soviet Union only because its leaders from Stalin on were not proper Communists. A champion of disinformation, it also invented "Eurocommunism," the doctrine whereby the satellite Communist parties were going to put the Kremlin on the right road at last. It is sad whenever a newspaper dies, but in this case not as sad as all that.

■ Remember Damian "Football" Williams? He was one of the thugs who pulled Reginald Denny out of his truck during the L.A. riots and beat him savagely. Williams provided the *pièce de résistance*, throwing a slab of concrete at Denny's head (the blow left a permanent depression in the right side of his skull) and then doing a touchdown dance over his

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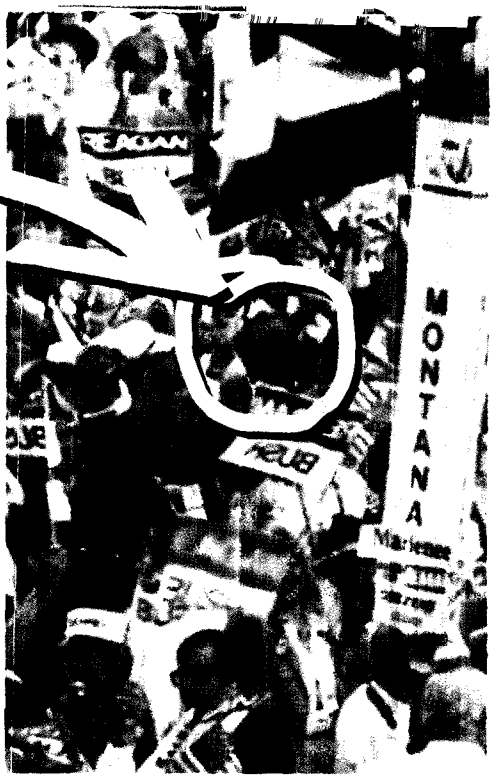

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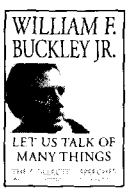

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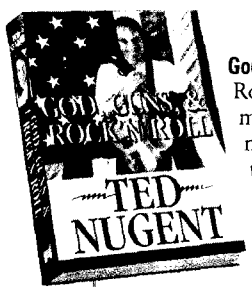

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unconscious body. He also attacked three Latinos and one Asian who happened to be nearby. During the trial, he and his associates were dubbed "The L.A. 4" by supporters, who cried racism. Maxine Waters visited his home. His attorneys said that Williams, who had seven prior arrests (though he had never been prosecuted), had been caught up in "group contagion"—in other words, the mob made him do it. Williams was sentenced to ten years; he served less than four. Now he has been arrested again for allegedly murdering a 43-year-old man in a dispute over drugs. Wilma Shanks, one of his attorneys in the Denny case, expressed surprise at the news. She should think harder: Perhaps it's a symptom of post-group-contagion stress syndrome.

■ Though the late-February holiday marked by car and furniture sales is often called "Presidents' Day," that is not its official name. Officially it has been Washington's Birthday since 1885. Now Sens. Richard Durbin and Edward Kennedy want to rechristen it Presidents' Day, in honor of Washington, Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, and "the institu-

Cheney: A Personal View

THIS is a personal story about Dick Cheney, at once a most improbable and most appealing choice for presidential running mate.

The improbabilities are political. Cheney is the first nominee to hail from the least populous state in the union. His home state is so reliably Republican that George W. Bush could carry it with just about anyone on the ticket. In a tight election in which Bush is trying to hold the high middle ground, Cheney has a very conservative voting record, which Al Gore's flacks are already using to demonize him. Furthermore, Cheney is, by his own admission, a dull speaker. Sometime early in the 1980s, when I shared a cab with Cheney to Capitol Hill after he spoke to an economic conference, I damned him with faint praise by saying that his speaking skills had improved.

"Maybe," he said. "But you have to remember that the Democratic speaker was Bill Bradley."

Cheney liked Bradley. More than that, though, he liked almost everyone with convictions, and he had a keen dislike for the phonies, who stood for nothing.

Here is why Cheney appeals to this longtime reporter. At a snowy Christmas party at Sam Donaldson's in 1989, the valet lost my car keys. The host was properly concerned, and my wife and I were overwhelmed with offers to call a cab or a locksmith. Cheney, then secretary of defense, was more direct. Both of us had grown up in sparsely populated western states (Wyoming for him, Nevada for me), where lost car keys in winter could be catastrophic. Ignoring a party where he was a focus of attention, Cheney volunteered to drive me home some 15 miles through the snow to get a spare set of keys. We were just leaving when the keys were found.

That's Cheney. I came to know him after he replaced Donald Rumsfeld as White House chief of staff for President Gerald Ford. "Rummy" was an accomplished insider—bright, tough, hard-working, and abrasive. Since I was new on the beat, he sought to intimidate me, putting down my stories to my editors. Fair enough, I thought, but I didn't like it.

Cheney, who had Rummy's qualities without the abrasiveness, took a different tack. He called me, not my editors, if he thought a story was off-base. And when a story was critical of Ford and on the mark, Cheney would credit me for getting it right. The word "spin" was not then in vogue, but Cheney never spun anyone, as far as I could tell. There was an unwritten rule that a public official should never lie but was not responsible if a reporter reached a wrong conclusion on his own. That wasn't good enough for Dick, who set me straight if I was going down the wrong track on a story—even one that helped his boss.

After Ford was defeated in 1976, Cheney ran for the lone Wyoming seat in the House. I was then the *Washington Post*'s bureau chief in the West and declined to do a story on his campaign because I was too close to the Cheneys. He won easily against a Democrat who had an arrest record (marijuana)—some of us playfully accused Cheney of paying his opponent's filing fee. But Cheney was no joke in the House, where he quickly became a player and dealt ably with Democratic leaders who learned that Cheney's word was his bond. Cheney, more than any other Republican, held his party together during the dark days of Iran-contra. At the White House, spin was in vogue, and I often called Cheney to find out what was happening. He always gave honest assessments on politics or legislation. But he was also a leading Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, and he drew a proper and patriotic line when it came to national-security matters.

When President Bush named Cheney secretary of defense, I attended the ceremony and told Cheney afterward that he had marched on the wrong foot. Cheney agreed, but said he wasn't being paid to march. What he was being paid for, he did well.

My wife, who once worked on the Hill, uses "normal" as her highest word of praise for politicians. Dick Cheney is utterly, completely, normal. He has good judgment and common sense. He is married to his high-school sweetheart, Lynne Cheney, who for my money could also serve on a presidential ticket. I don't know if Dick Cheney can help Bush get elected—in truth, the political calculus of this choice baffles me—but I do know that he could help Bush be a better president.

What Cheney has most of all, as the Founders would have put it, is a decent respect for the opinion of mankind. Any president could use a Cheney.

—LOU CANNON

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tion of the Presidency." Several great men have made it to the White House (and many ordinary ones), but to lump them together diminishes some of them, as it effaces history. Washington happened to be the first great man to hold the job. His eminence was recognized by all Americans, and by foreigners as diverse as Lord Byron, William Blake, and George III. Dick Durbin and Teddy Kennedy shouldn't be allowed to chop him down to size.

■ Celebrating her 100th birthday, Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, is apparently the first member of any royal family, British or other, to reach such an august age. A jolly pageant was staged in the center of London in her honor, with much dancing and fancy dress, and a huge range of celebrants, cast wide enough to include Mick Jagger's ex Jerry Hall and a chapter of Hell's Angels. There were party poopers, though, namely the BBC, which refused to televise the show, and a group of anarchists promising bombs. But this was the lady who under the threat of German invasion in 1940 set up a shooting range in the gardens of Buckingham Palace, and by all accounts became a pistol-packing mama. As it happened, independent television obtained some of its highest ratings ever, and the Queen Mother rode in an open horse-drawn carriage with no unusual or extra protective measures. If she hasn't learnt to scare yet, when will she?

■ The Louisiana chapter of the ACLU is considering legal action to prevent the sale of a new specialty license plate bearing the slogan "Choose Life." Approved unanimously by both houses of the state legislature last year, the plate will depict a newborn wrapped in a blanket, with the state bird, the brown pelican, standing in for the stork. The $25 fee will go to organizations that facilitate adoptions and provide services to expectant mothers. Louisiana is particularly crazy for license plates: The state currently offers 104 specialty tags, with slogans ranging from "Helping Schools" to "Preserve the Wild Turkey." But this one is too much for ACLU director Joe Cook, who says the plate "entangles the state with religion." The courts prevent legislators and citizens from actually *doing* anything to protect the unborn; is *saying* anything on their behalf to be restricted too?

■ In 1984, the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement at Graymoor in Garrison, N.Y., whose property is partially crossed by the Appalachian Trail, handed 58 acres over to the National Park Service. Now the government wants an additional 20 to 60 acres, and the Justice Department is poised to begin eminent-domain proceedings. The religious community has on its property a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center and a homeless shelter; it provides free food, showers, and beds to hikers along the trail. Before the friars become the latest casualty of the Clinton Legacy Quest, the administration ought to think politically: These monks are, after all, New York voters.

■ Everyone who knows golf knows that this is unbelievable: Tiger Woods is reigning PGA champion, and reigning U.S. Open champion, and reigning British Open champion. He has won the Masters by 12 strokes, the U.S. Open by 15, the British by 8. This simply is not . . . done. It would have seemed an impossibility. But Woods has made us think that everything is possible: even the Grand Slam, unachieved by anyone but Bobby Jones; even the toppling of Jack Nicklaus's records. Tiger is something new under the sun, a purveyor of perfection unlike anyone else the sport has ever seen. We can only shake our heads in wonder and gratitude: We are lucky—very lucky—to be around to see this.

■ A cerebral hemorrhage took the life of Sen. Paul Coverdell, Republican of Georgia, at age 61. Because Coverdell did not seek the spotlight, most conservatives probably do not realize how much they owe him. His victory in a runoff election, just weeks after Clinton's 1992 election, was a much-needed shot in the arm for Republicans. Coverdell then took the lead in organizing the opposition to the Clintons' health-care plan. Later, he helped to turn around the politics of education by championing education savings accounts, which let Republicans in Washington stand for something more than opposition to federal spending and regulation. Coverdell was the quintessential Senate workhorse, and it is unlikely anyone else in the Senate is going to fill the critical, if thankless, behind-the-scenes role that he played. R.I.P.

■ "Swaziland will ban miniskirts in schools starting next year to try to halt the spread of AIDS, a government official said. The aim is to put a stop to sexual relationships between teachers and their female pupils in a country where at least one quarter of the population is infected with HIV. School girls are widely blamed for enticing teachers with their short skirts" (Reuters). It might have helped in the White House, but it's not the answer in Swaziland.

POLITICS

End of the Big Show

As Republicans prepared to gather in Philadelphia, columnist Robert Novak wrote that their convention would be more tightly controlled by the foreordained nominee than any convention in recent memory. Advance reports forecast a carefully scripted procession of lawmakers and GOP speakers representing every hue, sex, and disability (on Monday night, there is supposed to be a blind mountain climber). A campaign that taps Dick Cheney for veep is not pursuing a high-risk strategy—but does a great American spectacle have to be *this* tame?

One obvious enemy of the convention as an art form has been television. In a layman's version of the Heisenberg principle, as soon as politicians understood that they were being observed, they began changing their behavior. In the Sixties, they ached for the notice of Walter Cronkite, Huntley & Brinkley, and the other anchors disposed like gods in their

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skyboxes. As the networks began losing interest and cutting coverage, the parties took ever more desperate steps to make their rituals viewer-friendly.

They had more leeway to streamline thanks to the second great enemy of the convention—democracy. In 1960, there were only half a dozen primaries that mattered. By now, every state has some primary or caucus. In front-loaded, free-spending cycles, most of these, it turns out, don't matter either (this year, John McCain ran out of gas at a point before Ronald Reagan had got going in 1976). But when every vote has been decided in advance, nothing is left for the convention. The real first ballot is cast in Iowa, and the last comes in March. No long demonstrations, no tedious polling of delegations.

There is a third, aesthetic reason for the creeping dullness of conventions—the tendency toward bland overproduction in all American public events. With sound systems able to overpower all the voices in even huge halls, and video systems able to turn any blank surface into a cineplex, every American event—from athletic half-time show to religious revival—has become a Wizard of Oz sound and light show. The convention has followed suit, as its ambitious managers try to program every toot and doodle. The all-time low point so far: Elizabeth Dole's walkabout at San Diego in 1996—unless it was the soulful stylings of Kenny G during the Ron Brown tribute at Chicago in 1996 (when the modern convention tries to be quiet and earnest, it is most vulgar and manipulative). No doubt these nadirs will be equaled this time around.

It's all too bad, because conventions still gather thousands of pols and party faithful in one place. Some of them are allowed to speak from the podium; others can be collared by the industrious reporter. What is on their minds will soon be on our minds, possibly in our laws. The real story is still the outside story.

But civic-mindedness has to be helped along by drama, ritual, and bustle. As these dwindle down to nothing, what is an ordinary person's incentive to pay attention? Las Vegas hotels have lately built little pseudo-cities: a fake Venice, a fake New York. What we will see in Philadelphia, and then Los Angeles, will be increasingly like fake conventions.

PUBLIC POLICY

The Tax Man Goeth

TAX cuts are back, after years of being written off as yesterday's issue. Congress has passed bills to eliminate the marriage penalty and the estate tax. Another bill would let people shield more of their savings from double taxation in IRAs and 401(k)s; it passed the House 401 to 25, with 182 Democrats defying the White House to vote for the tax cut. And now polls are finding that the public is growing more concerned about overtaxation.

Just last year, President Clinton was able to veto a grab bag of tax cuts without suffering politically. The principal difference this year is that House Republicans wisely decided to force separate votes on each tax cut. No longer could Democrats denounce one big tax-cut bill whose provisions were known to almost nobody. They had to defend specific policies—and proved unable to do so.

Republicans deserve credit, too, for taking the right approach to the marriage penalty. Initially they wanted only to rectify the quirk in the law that caused the total tax bill for two workers to go up if they got married. The bill they passed did that, but also made sure that one-earner couples would not be taxed more heavily than two-earner couples with the same income. The upshot is a little tax relief for all married couples, and a better tax code.

The votes on the estate tax and on savings accounts testified to the rapid rise of the new investor class. Americans do not want taxes to stop them from building up capital or passing it on. There is a lesson here for George W. Bush, who should be more aggressive in touting his own worthy tax-cut plan. Democrats are happy to oppose reductions in marginal-income-tax rates, the centerpiece of Bush's plan. They are manifestly afraid to oppose tax cuts for the new investors. Bush should use the ever-expanding budget surplus to offer them some.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Dancing at Camp David

IT'S on, it's off, it's on again, and finally it's over. Events at Camp David had the formality of steps in a barn dance—with this difference: Onlookers are rightly terrified of what will happen now that the music has stopped. Doomsday scenarios abound, and any one of them is possible. Expectations have been raised so high that it is hard to return to stalemate as usual.

For many years now, the issues at stake have been analyzed with minute expertise from every angle—and, alas, fought over. Irresistible forces meet immovable objects. The whole complex of Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlements on the West Bank throws up practical questions of borders—and abstract definitions of identity—that are intractable. Among ingenious proposals just for the future of Jerusalem are internationalization, U.N. trusteeship, an open city, a *corpus separatum*, and many versions of shared or joint sovereignty or autonomy between Israelis and Palestinians. However inventive the lawyers, the result is invariably the same: Two into one won't go.

Worthy as the aim for peace in the Middle East certainly is, President Clinton's initiative in summoning and attempting to influence these talks carried great and open-ended risks. Prime Minister Barak and Yasser Arafat were invited to compromise their highest interests and claims in the knowledge that each could convince only a doubtful percentage of his people. Too much compromise, and nationalist rage on either side boils over into violence. Too little

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compromise, and frustration also boils over into violence.

Decisions reached under the conditions of Camp David offered every scope for the law of unintended consequences to come into play. Israel was—and still is—urged to give birth to a Palestine that one day might appeal for the loyalty of Israeli Arabs, thus fragmenting Israel. And do not forget Jordan: Palestinians already form a majority in Jordan, and may one day fragment that country too. Three into one won't go either.

Political and historical enmities and fears of such magnitude are resolved only over long periods of time. Those all-night sessions instead consisted of horse-trading between ambitious men in search of personal advantage. We may be grateful that the irreconcilable positions of Israelis and Palestinians have been clarified for all to see, and presented to the public as matters of regret rather than declarations of war. Statements along the lines of a debating society, to the effect that progress has been made, more will be made in further talks, and this house believes that progress is a good thing, may help to hold Doomsday off. We may be grateful too that the United States failed in its bid to pressure smaller players into jeopardizing their peoples and their futures. The harm that "success" might have done hardly bears thinking about.

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: "Second the motion!" on Robert Tonucci's suggestion of taxing the "entertainment" industry. And I suggest another approach: Sue the villains! If McDonald's can be sued because they serve their coffee hot, surely the record companies, movie studios, producers, performers, songwriters, sponsors, etc. can be sued because some young punk wallowed in their muck just before he began his rampage.

The purveyors of evil are in it for the big bucks; sue them for big bucks! It's a language they'll understand, and it won't take grinding the wheels of government to do it.

Sincerely,
Mary L. Utley
LaPorte, Ind.

Dear Mrs. Utley: I dunno. Under your rule, could people sue NR for damage done to socialist thought? Advise.
Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: You have several times called attention to the conflict between the Fourteenth and Sixteenth Amendments. In looking at the Fourteenth, it seems to me that equal treatment under the law applies to laws written by the states, and not to laws written by Congress. Has this discrepancy been the subject of a ruling by the courts that makes it apply also to the federal government?

Sincerely yours,
Robert C. St. John
Lake Oswego, Ore.

Dear Mr. St. John: You're correct, except that the principle of "incorporation" imposes on states the same restrictions that apply to the federal government.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: I wear my NR T-shirt proudly, even though I figure it's only a matter of time before I'm publicly upbraided for it by one of our self-anointed apostles of toleration. So far, the only person who's found it provocative has been a member of the John Birch Society, who apparently felt an obligation to drop whatever else he was doing to give me the inside dope about how the world is really organized.

Fancy that! All these years, and it never even occurred to me that you were an agent of The Conspiracy! How could I have been so blind? Now, I hate to be rude, but I also don't like having my time wasted, so I was wondering if there's some way to get a card proclaiming me an honorary member of the CFR that I can flash at these people and say, "Shhh! It's all absolutely true! Just take my advice and don't breathe it to a soul. By the way, can I have your name and Social Security number?" Or would that be going too far?

Sincerely,
Carl B. Meadows
Atlanta, Ga.

Dear Mr. Meadows: Good fun. But let's keep the secret to ourselves.
Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Your nephew's cat/toast engine (described in the June 19 issue), which he plans to use as the basis of a high-speed monorail system, reminds me somewhat of the perpetual yo-yo that I perfected recently.

My idea consists of a piece of string in the vertical position with a yo-yo on each end. The lower one is just a conventional yo-yo, made of wood. The upper one is made of thin, light, hollow metal, filled with helium gas, and is lighter than air.

When released, the upper one goes up and the lower one goes down, until they reach the ends of the string simultaneously, whereupon they reverse their direction and go back toward each other.

Thus, you can see that the system just stays out there in midair, doing what yo-yos are wont to do.

It is obvious that this machine has many practical uses, although I never got a patent because I was afraid I might sell a couple and Janet Reno would get me for having a monopoly and I'd be reduced to ordinariness.

Sincerely,
J. Walter Lynch
Athens, Ga.

Dear Mr. Lynch: I'm sorry you haven't patented your p/m (perpetual-motion) machine. One thing you can bank on: Nobody can reduce you to ordinariness.
Cordially,

—WFB

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■ THE BOOK ON GORE ■

To His Own Self, Untrue

The many faces of Al

MARK STEYN

SOME months ago, Al Gore was dropped onto a remote island to see if he could live with himself for a year. Evidently, he found it difficult. Within a week, he'd multiplied into half-a-dozen different Als. The more Als he voted off the island, the more showed up the following morning. No sooner did one Alpha Gore take the lead and tear some harmless sloth limb from limb than a bewildering array of Alternative Gores emerged to challenge his dominance. The Al Gore who made labored, wooden, self-deprecating jokes about his woodenness was swiftly dispatched and used for kindling. But other Als weren't so easy to spot, blending in against the trees in their Gap leisurewear.

As in CBS's other reality-TV effort, *Big Brother*, it has been painful to watch some of these incompatible Als trying to live together on one island. There was the original Big Brother, the Al who followed you into your bathroom and inflicted federal toilet legislation on you and 260 million others. And then there was his complete opposite—Big Cistern, the Al who'd rented out a home with an ancient leaking toilet tank held together by bread-bag ties and then sat idly by as a Niagara-sized torrent cascaded across his tenants' floor 24 hours a day. There was the Al who, asked what he told his children about Bill Clinton and Juanita Broaddrick, replied that he would never "violate the privacy" of a family member, and the Al for whom there's no stricken relative you can't get a convention speech out of. The Al who created the booming economy and the Al who raged against corporate greed and the Al who spent the immediate post-primary season campaigning as a human Denver boot: Stay exactly where you are, America; do not attempt to move—an inch in any direction would be too "risky."

By Roman Genn

In the final months before November's season finale, only one Al can survive. Which one would *you* vote off? All of them? No point. A hundred more will spring up to take their place. There's Affirmative Al—the guy who sent Chris Smith, a black elected official in the Florida legislature, three personal letters asking for his support, all of them beginning, with touching directness, "Dear Black Elected Official . . ." There's Amos 'n' Al—the guy who, if Bill Clinton is (as Toni Morrison says) our first black president, sees no reason that he can't be the second. So, whenever he's appearing before a black audience, he lapses into a strange minstrel act, a-hollerin' and a-hip-swayin' like the amusing black maid in a 1930s movie. No one knows African Americans like Al Gore. As he bellowed at an audience in D.C., "Did you see the Bulls last night? I tell you, that Michael Jackson is unbelievable, isn't he? He's just unbelievable." Even the old they-all-look-alike-to-me defense doesn't really work here, since it's hard to mistake a muscular ebony sports superstar for an albino wacko in a surgical mask.

Sometimes Al is Ronald Reagore—his current campaign theme is "You ain't seen nothin' yet!" though in fact we've already seen plenty. For a couple of weeks after Super Tuesday he was John McGore, complete with a new catchphrase: "Like John McCain." Occasionally he is Robert F. Kennegore. Al Gore and Bobby Kennedy may not have seemed to have much in common, but that was before Al deployed his famous "iced tea" defense to the FBI and came out of the water closet as America's first openly incontinent vice president. LBJ said of RFK, "It's better to have him inside the tent pissing out than outside the tent pissing in"—and that goes double for Iced Tea Boy. Or, as Bill Clinton might put it, *Après moi, le déluge*.

As always with Al, it's the details that fascinate: Why iced tea? Why not Mountain Dew? Too caffeinated? Didn't poll so good with the soccer moms? If only Al were the Dullsville cigar-store Indian yawneroo he nailed down last time round

Mr. Steyn is a columnist for Britain's *Daily Telegraph* and Canada's *National Post*.

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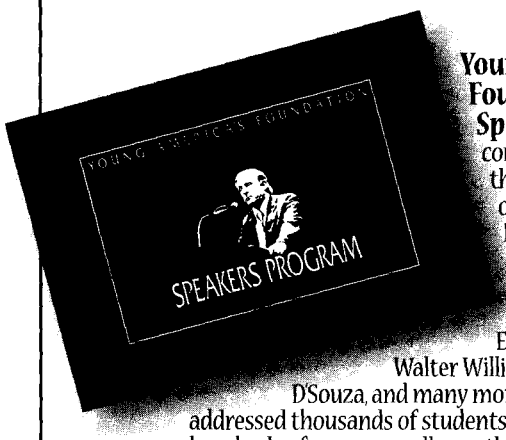

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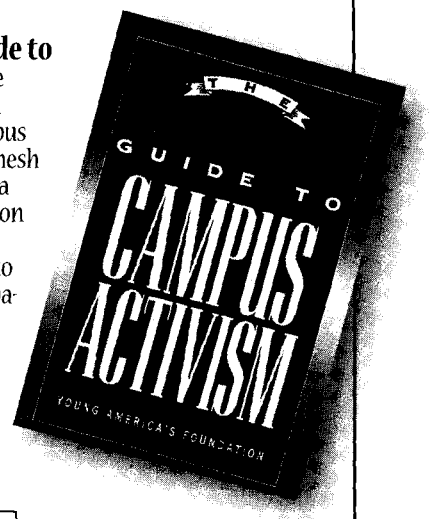

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when he was wowing the convention with his "Macarena" schtick. The walking lumberyard made him, in some ways, the least unattractive figure of the first Clinton term (see C. S. Lewis's definitive book on Bill, Hillary, and Al, *The Lyin', the Witch and the Wardrobe*). But in reality—admittedly a word that's hard to pin on the old shape-shifter—Al is a weirdo trying to pass himself off as a bore: He's an affront to genuinely wooden guys like Steve Forbes.

Al's never stiffer than when he's loosened up. On the Gore trail, every day is Dress-Down Friday, the vice president's advisers squeezing him into polo shirts and casual pants that would seem indecently tight on a Chippendale. When he was campaigning in New Hampshire, his nipples entered the room like an advance security team. Had Dubya decided to run as the first tan-and-olive open-necked presidential candidate in the Republic's history, Al would have been the first to attack it as "a risky menswear scheme."

Oh, and don't forget the debates: Al, we all know, is a ruthless, incisive debater who can think on his feet, while Dubya's a lazy lightweight who can barely remember his three or four stock phrases. That's why, when asked whether he supported a new federal law forbidding the execution of a pregnant woman, Al said: "Well, I don't know what the circumstances would be in that situation. I would, you know, it's an interesting fact situation, I'd want to think about it." So he did, and a day later he clarified his position: "The principle of a woman's right to choose governs in that case." To choose what? To postpone her execution? To abort her child by means of lethal injection?

Meanwhile, what about Governor Airhead? "There's a second life involved," said Dubya. "No matter what your position is on abortion or on the death penalty, you shouldn't put a pregnant woman to death." That's not the Republican or Democratic answer. That's the answer anybody who isn't a total idiot would give. As Al's discovering, sometimes a "ferociously impressive intelligence" just gets in the way. Invited to respond as a normal human being, Al neglected to have that program installed on his hard drive.

Among his authentic accomplishments, let's not forget he's the first and only presidential candidate to rent a herd of cows for the announcement of his candidacy. This was in the '88 campaign, back in Tennessee, when then-Senator Gore decided he needed the cattle as a backdrop for his speech:

"We'll want plenty of balloons, bunting, soda pop, recyclable paper cups, some 'Gore '88' buttons . . . oh, and order up some cows in assorted colors—Holsteins, Jerseys, maybe a couple of Angus . . ."

"Polled Herefords?"

"Geez, I just want 'em to stand there, I don't need to know their opinions."

Al, of course, grew up at the Fairfax Hotel in Washington, where the closest thing to a cow pasture was the roof terrace. But a decade after he sent his aides round to Herdz Cow Rental, he updated the Farmer Al act and took it on the road. Launching his Gore '00 campaign, he recalled his boyhood for the benefit of the *Des Moines Register*: "I'll tell you something else my father taught me. He taught me how to clean out hog waste with a shovel and a hose. He taught me how to clear land with a double-bladed axe. He taught me how to plough a steep hillside with a team of mules. He taught me how to take up hay all day long in the hot sun."

But then he junked the rolling acres of Tennessee as insufficiently proletarian, and for a few weeks started telling voters that he and Tipper once lived in a trailer park in Alabama. It was James Carville who said about Paula Jones that if you drag a hundred-dollar bill through a trailer park, there's no telling what you'll find. But even Carville might be surprised to drag a hundred-dollar bill through a trailer park and find Tipper Gore.

One overworn piece of American vernacular, Al seems to have taken literally: Get a life. Al calls 1-800-GET-LIFE, orders up a selection of traits, and hopes they add up. He wants to be rustic, but he also wants to be cool. At a party in Hollywood, Al happened to find himself next to Courtney Love, lead singer with the popular grunge band Hole. "I'm a really big fan," gushed the vice panderer. "Yeah, right,"

REMEMBER WHEN?

Abortion

September 10, 1980; Gore letter to *National Right to Life News*
"I am a firm supporter of the Hyde Amendment. I will continue to support efforts that are designed to prevent the use of federal funds in a manner which violates the relationship between the government and the individual protected by our Constitution."

June 26, 1984
Congressman Al Gore votes for House Amendment 942 (offered by Republican Mark Siljander of Michigan), which reads: "An amendment to define 'person' as including unborn children from the moment of conception."

July 18, 1984; Gore letter to constituent
"It is my deep personal conviction that abortion is wrong. I hope that some day we will see the current outrageously large number of abortions drop sharply. Let me assure you that I share your belief that innocent human life must be protected . . ."

March 7, 1988; unnamed Gore aide quoted in *U.S. News & World Report*
"Since there's a record of that [June 26, 1984] vote, we have only one choice. In effect, what we have to do is deny, deny, deny . . . We've muddled the point, and with luck, attention will turn elsewhere—or at least we'll be lucky enough so the thing doesn't blow into a full-fledged problem."

November 19, 1998; Gore speech
"Every time Congress has tried to play politics with a woman's right to choose—imposing gag rules and attaching anti-choice language to any bill they can think of—we have fought to stop them. And if they try it again, we'll stop them again."

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Lecture 6: *As You Like It*
Lecture 7: The Battles of *Henry VI*
Lecture 8: *Richard III* and the Renaissance

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sneered Miss Love. "Name a song, Al." The panicked veep floundered helplessly until his minders moved in to put him out of his misery.

Homosexuality? In the Eighties Al told the Tennessee papers that "I think it is wrong" and "I do not believe it is simply an acceptable alternative that society should affirm." But since then his position has evolved into the world's most over-extended furniture metaphor. "There's a lot said about having a seat at the table," he told the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, "but it's not enough for you to have a seat at the table. Everybody's got to realize that as full members of the American family it's your table too." "Does he want us to sit on it?" one gay mused to me.

In considering the many and varied Als who've danced briefly before our eyes in the last year, there's one thing Republicans and Democrats should be able to agree on: You'd never know getting elected president was Gore's only purpose in life. "We raised him for it," Albert Gore Sr. said in 1992. That's what is so odd about Junior: Anyone who spends any time in public quickly learns a persona he's comfortable with and sticks with it. It's not all of you, but it's an aspect of you that has enough of a grain of truth about it for you to keep it up without obvious difficulty. Al's been in public life all his life and is still trying out personas. What he himself feels about himself is hard to say, although a good place to look is *Earth in the Balance*, the vice president's widely unread book, except by the Unabomber, in whose cabin the feds found an extensively annotated copy. For some reason, the same views that got the Unabomber written off as patently insane are cited as evidence of the vice president's "intelligence" and "thoughtfulness." Anyway, somewhere around page 837, in some musings on the dysfunctional child, Al writes: "He begins controlling his inner-experience—smothering spontaneity, masking emotion, diverting creativity into robotic routine." Now which famous Android-American candidate does that sound like?

In what passes for unguarded moments, the campaign-finance-reforming black lesbian grunge rustic occasionally gives glimpses of the man he'd be if he weren't the dysfunctional child of the Ethel Merman of Senators: In 1992, he called for "completely eliminating the internal combustion engine"; in 1991 he spoke at an "Earth Mass," where earth-mother eco-crazies and their cats, dogs, and elephants joined Al to worship some unspecified New Age deity. "We are not separate from the earth," he intoned. "God is not separate from the earth." But he deftly separated himself from his supporters when it occurred to him they could threaten his political viability. I wonder, though, if Earth Mass Al isn't nearer to the real Al. Perhaps in the deepest canyons of his mind he pines for something simpler than the Clinton/Gore campaign's creative accounting: In another life he could have been sitting in the Unabomber's cabin reading *Earth in the Balance* instead of sitting in Washington writing it.

After he loses in November, Al will face his biggest reevaluation yet: What was it all for? Touting dead relatives, sucking up to Hole, drinking iced tea, talking slowly? Where did it get him? Come on, Al, there's a real Gore somewhere down there. Grow a beard, grab that double-bladed axe and your best mule, and head for Montana. **NR**

Spawn

Every bit his father's son

RICHARD LOWRY

"As some fathers inevitably began to insist on being the sole source of authority, their children became confused about their own roles in a family system that was severely stressed by the demands of the dominant, all-powerful father."

—Al Gore, *Earth in the Balance*

FROM literally the day he was born, Al Gore was wielded as a political tool, and honed for public office. When little Al arrived in 1948, his dad—then a congressman, eventually a senator—wanted to make the most of it. His Tennessee rival Estes Kefauver had gotten coverage only in the inside pages of the *Nashville Tennessean* for the recent birth of a daughter. The senior Gore would best him. "If I have a boy baby, I don't want the news buried inside the paper. I want it on page one, where it belongs." The *Tennessean* obliged, with a headline, "Well, Mr. Gore, Here HE Is—On Page 1."

And so began the life and public career of Albert Gore Jr. As two recent biographies of Gore—Bill Turque's *Inventing Al Gore* and Bob Zelnick's *Gore: A Political Life*—make plain, the vice president grew up in a Tennessee version of *The Truman Show*. Almost every major move in his life was decided on high by two parents who conceived of him—and perhaps even *conceived* him—as an instrument of their own ambition. "Albert and Pauline Gore made choices for their son with an eye to how each one would fit into a compelling pre-presidential narrative," Turque writes, "and important aspects of Gore's early years were routinely embroidered for public consumption." So much of the oddness of Gore, of the ferocity of his attacks, of the sheer, white-knuckled desperation with which he is running for president, can be attributed to his upbringing as the family's political drone, programmed to seek out and win high office.

Al Gore has had two important relationships with couples whose marriages have been devoted to power—the husband a self-made success from a humble background, the wife a talented, trail-blazing lawyer just as ambitious as her political partner. One of these couples, of course, is the Clintons. The other is his parents.

Albert Sr. was the son of a Scotch-Irish backwoods farmer in Possum Hollow, Tennessee. He first acquired political ambitions after seeing a cousin's campaign flyers tacked to utility poles and imagining his own picture in the same place. He worked his way through college and began ascending the political ladder, reaching his height when he had a shot at the Democratic vice-presidential nomination in 1956. When a deal to give him the nomination fell apart and threw the choice open to convention delegates, according to a witness quoted by Turque, Gore tore through the convention hall seeking supporters in a frenzy: "I have never seen before or since such a complete, total example of a man so completely

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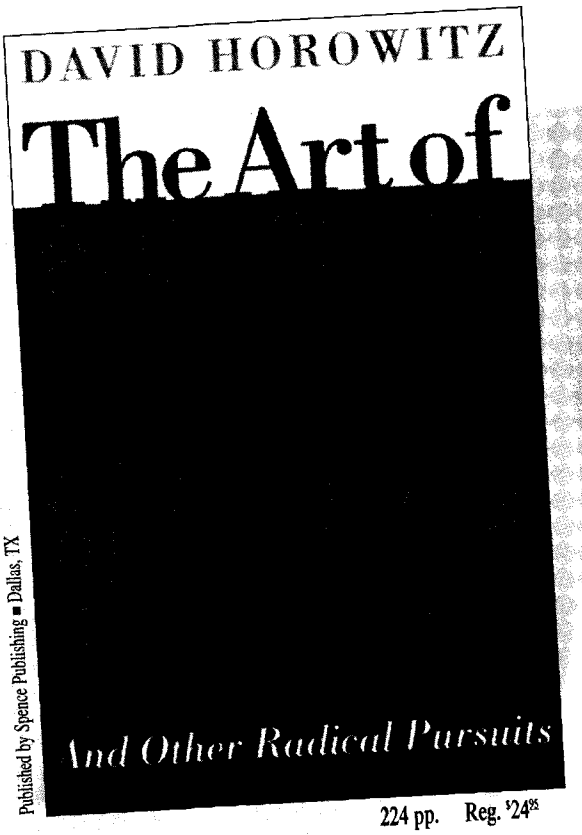

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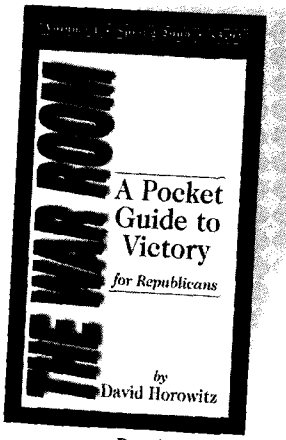

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and absolutely wild with ambition. It had literally changed his features."

Most observers considered his wife, Pauline, the politically shrewder and more calculating half of the couple. She was one of the first women ever to graduate from Vanderbilt Law School, but was frank about her decision to give up a career to become a political wife: "I was not only ambitious for him, but for myself too." In the late 1950s and '60s, she became one of the most active socialites in Washington, often handing off care of little Al. (He boarded as a senior at St. Alban's, even though it was just minutes away from the Gore apartment at the Fairfax Hotel.) Of course, her ambitions extended to her son. Before a 1988 debate in Iowa, Turque reports, she passed Al a note reminding him, "Smile, Relax, Attack." *Thanks, Mom!*

Gore's parents promoted him in the press—"He's a Budding Politician," blared a headline in the *Knoxville News-Sentinel* about the six-year-old Gore—and introduced him to the world of high Washington. Turque writes, "As he marched through his cameos at dinner parties and other Washington social gatherings, he was less a kid than a miniature grown-up, working the room on his parents' behalf." The most trying part of his training came in the summers, when his father insisted he visit Tennessee (to sink roots in the state) and work the family farm to develop discipline. Al was put in the care of the Gore tenant farmers and given backbreaking, almost abusive tasks, such as clearing a field using just a hand axe.

His duty didn't end there. If Bill Clinton tap-danced around serving in Vietnam in an effort to preserve his "viability within the system," Al Gore volunteered in an attempt to preserve his father's. He campaigned with the senior Gore in 1970 wearing his uniform. "He felt by helping his dad and campaigning with his dad that that was the greatest thing he as an individual could do to stop the war," a Gore friend told Zelnick. It wasn't enough, as Gore Sr. was swept out in the backlash against his association with the new anti-war, pro-civil-rights (and pro-busing) liberalism. "I told the truth as I saw it," Gore's dad said on election night. "The causes for which we fought are not dead. The truth shall rise again!"

The truth took the form of little Al. The need to avenge his father's loss contributed to the odd—and toxic—mix of righteousness and ambition in Gore. As a politician, his father was no better than he should have been. He may well have benefited from rich donors descending on Nashville to bid up prices at his cattle auctions. After his Senate defeat, he eagerly leapt into the arms of Armand Hammer, the Soviet agent whom he had helped protect during his political career and who in turn enriched him as a private citizen. But the preening senior Gore had a vision of himself as a modern-day Cicero, a repository of senatorial dignity and liberal virtue. His opponents, needless to say, were the dark side, purveyors, as his son put it, of "subliminal smut."

But when it came time for Gore to continue the family's public mission, he did it in a strange way: by running away from his father's—and his own—positions. "Sweet vindication," his father would boast after Gore won his congressional race (and after Gore was nominated as vice president at the Democratic convention in 1992, Gore Sr. charged the stage, both arms raised in triumph). Well, not exactly. As Turque puts it, "Al Gore honored his father by entering public life, but he honored his mother by doing what it took to win." He made it clear he wasn't a liberal, abandoning positions he had advocated in unsigned editorials as a writer for the *Nashville Tennessean*. He distanced himself from any vestige of dovishness. He denounced homosexuality. He opposed gun-registration laws. He criticized abortion.

The two Gores

Gore's national ambitions would eventually dictate again adopting liberal positions with which he had more personal sympathy. All politicians have their pragmatic streaks. What is notable about Gore is the vehemence with which he advocates any given position—developing the Midgetman missile means saving the world from nuclear holocaust, the globe teeters on the brink unless Gore's global-warming policies are adopted, Jim Crow beckons if Republican attempts to roll back race preferences aren't resisted. Critics always argue that Clinton's flexibility is a product of his unprincipled ambition. In an odd way, Gore's seeming inflexibility is a product of the same thing.

But his moral vanity, inherited from his father, keeps him from ever allowing practical politics its due. For Gore, it always has to be something more. His—and his family's—ambition always must be identified with an exquisite purity of purpose, which, in turn, justifies the most vicious tactics (a departure from his father, who abjured negative campaigning). This is why Gore could rip into Bill Bradley in misleading ways and still maintain a position of moral superiority during the primaries. Bradley had soiled himself by standing in Gore's way.

After the primaries, Gore executed one of the more baldly cynical moves of the campaign by adopting McCain's campaign-finance agenda. In an overwrought speech, he invoked his father as the inspiration behind his proposals, and made them more radical than McCain's, arguing that democracy itself

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was at stake. It was almost as if Gore had to convince *himself* that he wasn't just executing a tactical maneuver, as if his rhetorical fire would purify his own motives. In this way, the extremism of his proposals wasn't a sign of his conviction, but his lack of it. Gore applied much the same democracy-at-risk justifications to his robust 1996 fundraising efforts.

Al Gore Sr. in many ways succeeded in his plans for his son. He produced a bright and talented heir, who is a capable public speaker (his dad bragged about his grammar), disciplined, with an impressive capacity for work. But Al Gore is also a prig, who has trouble connecting to ordinary people and whose ferocity knows no bounds in pursuit of the expectations placed on him from the time he took his first breaths. In a year when authenticity, and perhaps even—after the sagas of Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich—normality, are in public demand, Al Gore might be grossly mis-positioned. Maybe it would have been better if his father had let him be an ordinary boy, after all.

NR

REMEMBER WHEN?

Guns

1976; Bill Turque, *Inventing Al Gore*, p. 119
Congressional candidate Al Gore says to a friend: "Look, I'm running in a district where people favor guns, and there's no way I can win if I take a position that indicates I'm going to take away their guns. It's as simple as that."

1984 Senate campaign; quoted in *New York Times*, July 6, 2000
"I do not believe such measures [strict controls on gun sales and ownership] would keep handguns out of the hands of criminals."

1984
The National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action declares: "Since being elected to Congress in 1976 Al Gore has been there each and every time sportsmen and gun owners have needed a friend."

1985; *CQ Almanac 1985*
Senator Al Gore supports a variety of measures to loosen restrictions on interstate gun sales and to increase restrictions on the ability of authorities to inspect gun dealers' records.

1985–1990; NRA vote analysis
Sen. Al Gore votes with the NRA 75 percent of the time.

July 12, 1999; Gore speech on crime
"Some want more concealed weapons—but they can't conceal the fact that they're just doing the NRA's bidding. Some want to overturn local gun-control laws. I want to overturn the influence of the gun lobby."

The Eco-tist

Gore as green

RONALD BAILEY

AL GORE evidently believes that the world might come to an end if he's not elected president. How did he come to such an extraordinary conclusion?

The seeds of this conviction can be found at Harvard University. Back in the 1960s, when he was an underachieving—and intellectually malleable—student, Gore's two greatest pedagogical influences were oceanographer Roger Revelle and psychologist Erik Erikson. Revelle introduced Gore to the idea of the man-made "greenhouse effect"; Erikson's course taught Gore that Western civilization has been too "male" in its view of the world. Gore now apparently believes, combining the two perspectives, that what we need to save the planet is a woman's touch.

On the environment, especially, Gore is a creature of his times. In his 1992 manifesto *Earth in the Balance*, he reverently cites his mother's admiration for Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. The period of Gore's intellectual formation, the mid 1960s, was also the heyday of alarmist predictions (by, among others, the Paddocks in *Famine 1975!* and Paul Ehrlich in *The Population Bomb*) of imminent global famine owing to overpopulation. The early 1970s, when Gore was in graduate school, saw the oil crisis, as well as the publication of the Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth* and E. F. Schumacher's neo-Luddite *Small is Beautiful*.

It was against this background of cultural demoralization that Gore was elected to Congress in 1976. He was a part of that era's movement to control technological progress: He opposed deregulating natural gas, favored stringent controls on the nascent biotechnology industry, and supported the creation of the costly and slow Superfund waste-cleanup initiative. Just as the nuclear-freeze campaign was revving up in the early 1980s, Gore began studying the arcana of nuclear-deterrence theory. He writes in *Earth in the Balance* that studying nukes led him to "a deeper appreciation for the most horrifying fact in all our lives: Civilization is now capable of destroying itself." This realization caused Gore to think "about the course of our nation and our civilization . . . I also began to think about what role I might play in determining that course."

Gore's millenarian spark is expressed most clearly in this book, reissued for the election year. The book calls on Americans to "become partners in a bold effort to change the very foundation of our civilization" and to "make the rescue of the environment the central organizing principle of our civilization." Gore makes it clear that his crusade is not just

Mr. Bailey is the science correspondent for *Reason* magazine.

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to save the material world, but to save America's soul: "The more deeply I search for the roots of the global environmental crisis, the more I am convinced that it is an outer manifestation of our inner crisis that is, for lack of a better word, spiritual."

Gore cites the resurgence of religious fundamentalisms—and the rise of various New Age creeds—as evidence of "a spiritual crisis in modern civilization that seems to be based on an emptiness at its center and the absence of a larger spiritual purpose." Gore's response is to offer his own version of a New Age creed as a way to fill the spiritual void: the rescue of the natural world from humanity's depredations.

Gore has thus joined the long list of millenarians who hector the rest of us that the world will come to an end unless society does what they command. Political scientist Richard Hofstadter tagged this demagogic apocalypticism the "paranoid style" of politics; political paranoids, he wrote, believe that all of humanity's ills can be traced "to a single center and hence can be eliminated by some kind of final act of victory over the evil source." For Gore and many other environmentalists, the contemporary focus of evil is the alleged ecological crisis, and the source of the problem is, in Gore's words, "our dysfunctional civilization": "In psychological terms, our rapid and aggressive expansion into what remains of the wildness of the earth represents an effort to plunder from outside civilization what we cannot find inside . . . [It] is a willful expansion of our dysfunctional civilization into vulnerable parts of the natural world."

Hofstadter said that the political paranoid "traffics in the birth and death of whole worlds, whole political orders, whole systems of human values." Similarly, radical environmentalists believe themselves uniquely capable of seeing the impending catastrophe, while the rest of unrepentant humanity remains stubbornly blind to the danger. "There is a seduction in apocalyptic thinking," historian Eric Zencey writes. "If one lives in the Last Days, one's actions, one's very life, take on historical meaning and no small measure of poignance." The mission of rescuing the environment lends a richer meaning to Gore's life than the ordinary business of government possibly could.

Of course, part of being a true believer is brooking no opposition. Gore's staff apparently orchestrated a smear campaign against atmospheric scientist Fred Singer, having one of Roger Revelle's colleagues claim that Singer had manipulated Revelle (Gore's own mentor!) into writing that man-made global warming is "too uncertain to justify drastic action at this time." (Singer's attacker later apologized.) In another extraordinary episode, *Nightline* anchor Ted Koppel revealed that Gore had sent over reams of disparaging material in an effort to get the program to investigate the motives of prominent climatologists who are skeptical of the global-warming disaster scenario. *Nightline* did investigate—and concluded that the skeptics were sincere and had reasonable scientific arguments.

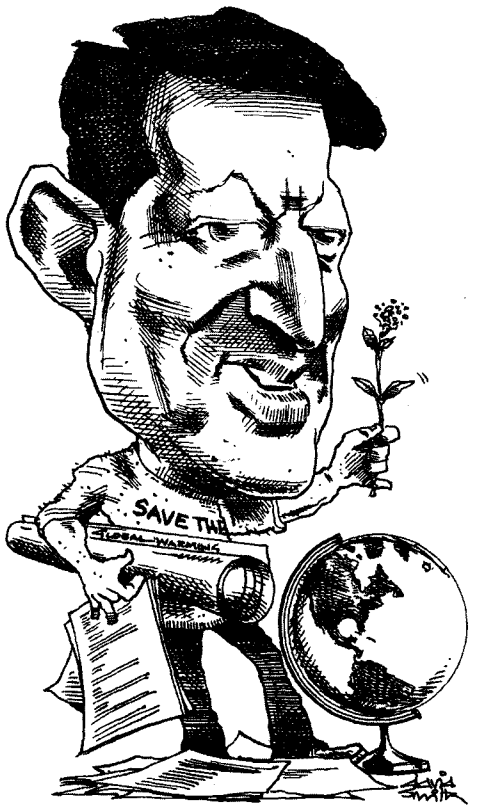
■

Gore has joined the long list of millenarians who hector the rest of us that the world will come to an end unless society does what they command.

■

Many of Gore's specific policies have long been advocated by the radical environmental fringe. In *Earth in the Balance*, Gore proposes the creation of a "Strategic Environmental Initiative" that would focus on stabilizing the earth's population and atmosphere, and establish a United Nations Stewardship Council. This proposal echoes that of global-warming scaremonger Stephen Schneider, who, in *The Genesis Strategy* (1976), advocated the creation of "World Security Institutes" as "planning bodies considering environmental, political, economic, and social aspects of policy options from a global perspective."

Gore says one of our "strategic goal[s] should be the establishment of a cooperative plan for educating the world's citizens about our global environment . . . The ultimate goal of this effort would be to foster new patterns of thinking about the relationship of civilization to the environment." Compare this to Schneider's plan for a new fourth branch of government, which would broadcast the environmental agenda and lead the public to "question present value systems and adopt a new political consciousness." If Gore gets elected, Schneider might well get his wish.



By David Smith

The energy plan unveiled recently by the Gore campaign is also telling. It's largely a rehash of his old agenda: massive subsidies for alternative-energy technologies, and enforcement of energy conservation. Gore takes his energy-policy cues from Amory Lovins, co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Institute, whose 1976 *Foreign Affairs* article "Energy Strategy: The Road Not Taken?" remains the environmentalists' bible on energy issues.

Gore's views are out of the mainstream, and they pose a new and unusual threat for America. When a president is motivated by cynicism or lust for power, he can do *some* damage—but when a president genuinely wants to turn the world upside down, he can do much more harm. A Gore presidency is a risk we just don't need. **NR**

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The Luddite

He invented the Internet?

ROBERT GOLDBERG

THE same week that scientists announced the complete decoding of the human genome, Al Gore declared war on medical progress. Even though the private sector completed sequencing the genome ahead of the government—and is already developing information that will help produce powerful new drugs—Gore rarely credits the work of private biotech and drug companies in discovering important new medicines. Now Gore has launched a populist attack on "price gouging" by the drug companies.

Pundits view this as just a ploy to solidify Gore's standing among senior citizens and build support for his proposed new Medicare drug entitlement; but Gore's animus runs deeper. He distrusts biotechnology, and stripping the biopharmaceutical industry of its powers by turning it into a public utility is something he has had in mind for years.

His role as an enemy of medical progress should come as no surprise. When biotech Luddite Jeremy Rifkin wrote *Algeny*—a diatribe against gene-based drug development in which he implied that the human life span should revert to that enjoyed before the Bronze Age so that mankind could be closer to nature—it was Al Gore who wrote the glowing blurb that Rifkin has given us "an insightful critique of the changing way in which mankind views nature." Then-congressman Gore invited Rifkin to advise the Science and Technology Subcommittee about the dangers of biotechnology, and about Gore's proposal to have the federal government regulate genetic engineering.

In *Earth in the Balance*, Gore wrote longingly of the Dark Ages as a time when religious dogma dominated science. In a 1991 article for the *Harvard Journal of Law and Technology*, he referred to biotechnology as "a powerful, and threatening tool."

As vice president, he has portrayed himself as a proponent of medical progress—because he promises to expand the government's role in biomedical research. In fact, however, his recent proposals are consistent with his belief that biotechnology is a threat to humanity.

His public-utility vision of drug development is pure fiction, which will only delay real progress in the war against cancer. The (federal) National Institutes of Health has never produced a huge number of drugs; it was set up to fund more basic research. Indeed, the drug-development program of the National Cancer Institute (also federal) has never developed one cancer drug without substantial private-sector support, nor does it have the resources to conduct the clinical tests of safety and efficacy that are required before breakthrough drugs can be brought to market.

The federal cancer project relies largely on discoveries in private labs; private researchers do most of the heavy lifting that results in medical progress. But Gore suggests that drug companies and biotech firms only rip off—and market—what government scientists come up with. And he—joined, sadly, by some Republicans—wants to impose government price controls on any product a private company developed in collaboration with government scientists, or that relied on research that had any federal support, at any time.

Years ago, there *were* price controls on such partnerships; the result was long delays in the development of many important new drugs for cancer and mental illness. Hundreds of interesting research projects withered on the vine. It was only after NIH director Harold Varmus eliminated price controls, in 1995, that such partnerships, including the genome project, began to flourish.

■

Gore's public-utility vision of drug development is pure fiction, which will only delay real progress in the war against cancer.

■

Since collaboration occurs at one time or another in most projects—government scientists are often invited to coauthor research papers with university and private-sector scientists—Gore could claim that virtually everything is federal research and therefore subject to price controls. The result would be to kill much important gene-based research. Currently, the twelve genomic companies have an aggregate market capitalization of $36 billion—120 times the NIH budget for the human-genome project. If Gore's policies are put in place, their value will collapse.

The main problem with Gore's position is that it's based on a fundamentally mistaken assumption—that drug companies earn their profits not by investing in truly valuable drugs, but through price gouging. Several studies demonstrate that the rise in drug spending is *not* the result of rising drug prices, or of the launch prices of new drugs, but of the increase in the *use* of newer medications. In countries with drug plans similar to those proposed by Gore, the rise in drug prices is avoided by the use of older and cheaper drugs: In Canada, France, and the United Kingdom, the entry of new drugs is delayed for up to five years—and even when drugs are approved, they are not paid for by the government. Britain's National Health Service only recently decided to cover the use of Taxol for breast cancer (which is standard in the U.S.). It is estimated that Britain's delay cost about 25,000 lives a year.

Our Department of Veterans Affairs, in a policy embraced by Gore allies as an example of how a Medicare drug benefit could be administered, routinely denies schizophrenics the most effective anti-psychotic medications in favor of the

Mr. Goldberg is senior research fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., and a research fellow with the National Center for Policy Analysis in Dallas.

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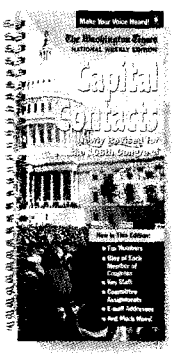

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cheapest ones; victims of pancreatic cancer are denied access to Gemzar, the cutting-edge treatment for the disease, and are instead given a drug that is less powerful and has more side effects.

It doesn't take an inventor of the Internet to figure out that Gore's war on medical progress would wound our nation for generations to come. It would lead to a huge loss in what Harvard University's David Cutler and Elizabeth Richardson call "health capital—the dollar value of health a person will have over the course of their remaining life." For a newborn in 1990, Cutler and Richardson estimate health capital at about $3 million, while for the elderly, health capital is nearly $1 million. Health capital has increased greatly over time—by roughly $40,000 to $50,000 per decade. Gore believes that drug companies earn profits by price gouging, not by investing in valuable new drugs; but Cutler has found that *just 30 percent* of the increase in America's health capital in the past 40 years would have been enough to justify that period's investment in medical progress.

Moreover, it is clear that gains in life expectancy, birth weight, and the reversal of starvation in the developing world are largely due to advances made through medical progress. Columbia University professor Frank Lichtenberg has found that, over the past decade, a one-time pharmaceutical R&D expenditure of about $15 billion subsequently saves 1.6 million life-years per year. Lichtenberg also found that for every dollar spent on new drugs, America saves nearly four dollars on physicians and hospitalizations.

Al Gore's plan will do little to ease the plight of the 20 million people worldwide who are afflicted with Alzheimer's, or the 24 million in Africa with AIDS, or the millions more with cancer. His small, federally regulated and funded biotech business would kill incentives for investment and drain wealth into Medicare entitlements. The result would be a death knell for medical progress, retarding and reversing the recent gains in health and life expectancy. America would pay a huge, and unnecessary, price for a new middle-class entitlement, and for Gore's life-denying vision of biotechnology. **NR**

REMEMBER WHEN?

Bilingual Education

February 12, 1981; *Carthage Courier*

"The English language is at the core of the American culture, and, in order to make a contribution to our society, immigrants in the past accepted the chore as a necessity. Anything which requires our schools to delay the all-important process of learning the language of their new country serves only to set up *additional barriers for the immigrant child.*"

June 19, 1999; Gore speech to Hispanic group NALEO

"Some will exploit the issue of bilingual education for political gain. I believe we must support bilingual education—*for educational gain.*"

Hey, Big Spender!

Gore and your money

STEPHEN MOORE &
JAMES CARTER

In Al Gore, Democrats have at last nominated the perfect liberal. Bill Clinton has been an imperfect liberal, because he has always cared more about his own political survival than about the Left's agenda; Gore, in contrast, is far too committed—ideologically and emotionally—to the liberals to abandon them so cavalierly.

Gore is more perfect than Hubert Humphrey, George McGovern, Walter Mondale, and Michael Dukakis—because he can win. He will play the role of the "New Democrat," with soothingly moderate and Clintonesque campaign rhetoric. But the truth is that Gore's record and platform are no less statist than those of a Dukakis or McGovern. In fact, they are more so: By our calculations, Gore wants to spend $1 trillion on new programs over the next decade—on programs, such as universal preschool funding, that a Walter Mondale would never have endorsed. This is what makes Gore the perfect liberal: the unique combination of electability and a deep-rooted ideological commitment to the expansion of government.

In considering Gore's liberal credentials, start with his congressional tenure. The National Taxpayers Union tells us that he was the only senator who has ever—that's right, ever—won the NTU award for the biggest spender on Capitol Hill two years in a row. In 1989 and 1990, he managed to nudge out Ted Kennedy for this honor. Evidently, in those two years there were certain spending bills Gore voted for that were just so fiscally reckless that even Kennedy couldn't, in good conscience, support them. In 11 of 13 years, Gore received the lowest possible grade from NTU on taxpayer issues. How Republicans ever allowed Gore to define himself as a "moderate Democrat" is a mystery.

One of the first votes Gore cast in Congress was in opposition to the Reagan tax cuts of 1981. Twenty years, 35 million jobs, and 10,000 points on the Dow Jones later, he still crows about that vote—reveling in his anti-tax-cut credentials. He savaged his two chief political rivals within the party, Dick Gephardt and Bill Bradley, for having voted for "trickle-down economics." (If Gore had had his way and the Reagan tax cuts had never been enacted, the average middle-income family in America would be paying $6,000 more in taxes every year.)

Bradley made the fatal mistake of trying to run to the left

Mr. Moore is the president of the Club for Growth, and Mr. Carter is an economic analyst in Washington, D.C.

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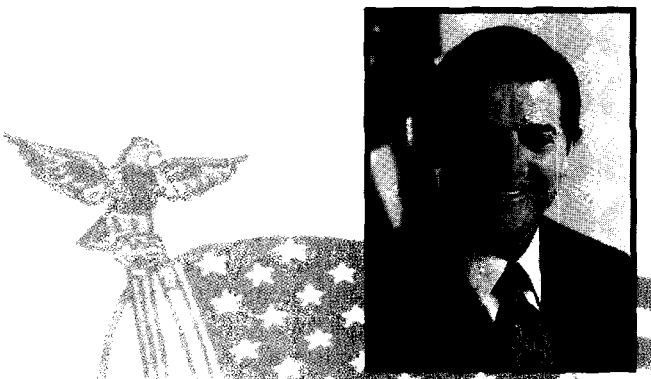

Congressman Tom DeLay (R-TX)

Dear Fellow Republicans,

Conventions like the GOP convention in Philadelphia are often a time for celebration. And it is true that our Party and the conservative cause have much to cheer.

We balanced the budget.
We protected Social Security.
We reformed welfare.

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of Gore in the primaries; it would have taken a crowbar to wedge into that narrow territory. Gore quickly established his leftist credentials and crushed the insurrection. Ralph Nader, we suspect, will face the same frustrations.

Everything we know about Gore's role in economic policymaking as vice president is that he has been a consistent voice of unreason in the White House. The famous 1993 BTU tax was Gore's inspiration. Bob Woodward reported that Gore pleaded with Clinton to the very end not to drop this regressive energy-tax proposal. (Incidentally, if all of Gore's energy policies were ever actually implemented, we'd look back on $2-a-gallon as a great bargain.) George Stephanopoulos's book informs us that "Clinton would vent privately that Gore was pushing him to raise taxes too much." Gore swallowed his 1993 disappointment that the largest tax increase in the history of the world wasn't big enough, and cast the tie-breaking vote for it in the Senate. He's as proud of that vote as he is of the vote against Reaganomics.

■

Al Gore is trapped in the 1970s and he can't get out. He is a fiscal throwback to a much worse economic time.

■

Even now, with the swelling federal surplus, Gore will support only the most circumscribed tax cuts. On the campaign trail, he has offered up dozens of baffling new tax carve-outs that must have the folks at H&R Block drooling in anticipation of all the added pages of tax-code complexity: tax credits for child care, tax credits for parents who "stay at home to care for their babies," an "after-school tax credit," a long-term-care credit for elderly parents, college-tuition tax credits, "life-long learning tax credits," estate tax credits for family farmers, and business tax credits for "worker training in information technology." Our personal favorites are the "tax credit to consumers for the purchase of more fuel-efficient cars and SUVs," and the tax write-offs for building energy-conserving homes and using solar energy to generate electricity and hot water. Help! Al Gore is trapped in the 1970s and he can't get out.

He is a fiscal throwback to a much worse economic time. Under a Gore presidency, the IRS tax code would start to resemble a piece of bologna after someone has punctured out all the little green olives. The essence of good tax policy is, of course, the exact opposite: low rates, no loopholes, and a broad base. In principle, a tax credit is better than no tax cut at all, but the sum total of all these microscopic, focus-group-tested carve-outs won't reduce many families' overall tax liabilities. When we add up all the 87 tax increases in the latest Clinton-Gore budget proposal, it turns out that the revenue raisers and the Gore tax cuts pretty much cancel each other out. If Gore prevails, there will be a whole lot more lines on your tax form to wrestle with every April, but the size of your check to the IRS would be no smaller.

Gore can't afford grandiose "tax-cut schemes," because he's got spending on his mind. His gold-plated prescription-drug-benefit program for seniors would cost $200 billion. His "Retirement Savings Plus" plan would dole out another $200 billion to low-income workers, who can't afford to save on their own because the Social Security taxes that Gore has consistently voted to raise are so high. Expanding government health coverage to uninsured families would cost $146 billion. His plan to provide free or subsidized preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds costs $115 billion. He also wants a lot more money for regulators at OSHA, the EPA, and the civil-rights and antitrust snoops at the Justice Department; $16 billion for teacher pay raises and teacher recruitment; $200 million for an antismoking initiative; $45 million for curtailing violence at abortion clinics; $2 billion to combat urban sprawl; several million more to keep studying global warming—you get the picture.

The unhappy total comes to about $1.04 trillion of new spending over the next decade, or about $10,000 per household. But, of course, to provide a fair and balanced accounting we need to subtract from this trillion-dollar spending binge the money that Gore would save by shutting down agencies he believes are inefficient and obsolete. The problem is, there aren't any. Zero. Out of the several thousand federal programs in the eight-pound federal budget, Al Gore hasn't yet identified a single one that should be terminated.

For 20 years, Gore has been a reflexive liberal force, first in Congress and then as vice president. He rarely, if ever, defects to the right on budget and tax issues. His multibillion-dollar proposals to nationalize day care, health care, education, crime fighting, transportation policy, and traffic patterns are audacious in their magnitude, yet are brilliantly softened with conservative themes of advancing "accountability," "high standards," "responsibility," "community," "safe neighborhoods," and even "fiscal discipline." Al Gore is, in a word, a fraud. His tactic of saturating statist McGovernite policies in syrupy communitarian rhetoric may be a perfect fit for this new age of feel-good politics—and it might just fly with voters. This makes Al Gore the perfect liberal, and a very dangerous man. **NR**

REMEMBER WHEN?

China MFN

September 1, 1992; *San Francisco Chronicle*

"We totally disagree with Bush and Quayle when they continue to grant most-favored-nation status to one of the worst Communist dictatorships remaining in the world, with a record of human-rights violations as long as your arm, ignoring their unfair trade practices."

April 25, 2000; Gore speech

"I have stood strongly for Normal Trade Relations with China. I reaffirm that support today. And in the days and weeks ahead, I will continue to do all I can to build support in Congress for it."

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The Balkanizer

Gore as multiculti

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

HAS anyone noticed that Vice President Gore is turning into Zelig? Every time I turn on the television, he seems to have adopted some new personality to suit the audience he is addressing. Before black audiences, as Mark Steyn and others have pointed out, he is particularly startling. At the NAACP convention, one half expected Gore to address Kweisi Mfume as "Mr. Bones." Innocent entertainers are not allowed to put on blackface anymore. It is thought to be racist. Even the relatively robust British discontinued their television version of the *Black and White Minstrel Show* in the late '70s. So to have a Democratic vice president of the United States coming over like Al Jolson on speed counts as something of a cultural landmark. It was very nice of the NAACP to pretend not to notice.

A few days before that, the veep had done a warmup at a La Raza conference in San Diego. According to the Riverside *Press-Enterprise*, he "sprinkled Spanish phrases throughout his speech such as *Los quiero mucho* (I love you all) and at one point yelled *Si, se puede* (It can be done), the battle cry chanted during the fight of the United Farmworkers Movement." In a multicultural moment, he shouted exuberantly: *Todavia no han visto nada.* (You ain't seen nothing yet.)

One can hardly wait for Gore to address a meeting of gays and lesbians. Which stereotype will he take out of the closet to express his solidarity? The limp wrist and sibilant sarcasm of the gay male? Or the gruff voice of the stern lesbian?

It is understandable, of course, that Gore should like to try on different personalities for size. Like Zelig, he must borrow what he lacks. But the fact that he should mimic particular racial and ethnic styles reveals in addition quite a lot about the approach of the modern Democratic party to electoral politics. Just as the well-spoken Tony Blair suddenly develops an "estuary English" glottal accent when appearing on down-market television programs—for in Britain class rather than race is the electoral marker—so Al Gore hints that at some level he is himself black, Hispanic, or whatever the schedule requires that day. He empathizes like nobody has ever empathized.

This appeal is based on a segmented political market. Blacks are addressed as blacks, Hispanics as Hispanics, gays as gays, etc., rather than as Americans who share common interests even if they arrive from different backgrounds. And this ethnic particularism influences more than the personal style of candidates; it also dictates that policy must be tailored to different groups. Thus, when he addressed La Raza, Gore promised to support affirmative action, to soften the federal crackdown on illegal immigration, and to advance Hispanic education.

Much of this is the standard political fare that both parties have dished out to minorities since the middle of the 19th century. Where the Clinton administration has gone further, however, is in playing on ethnic resentments to divide and rule the electorate. For instance, Democratic ads in 1996 linked the GOP with the burning of black churches (itself an issue distorted to give it racial salience—in fact, white churches were burned as well as black ones and the arsonists' motives were generally religious rather than racial). Similarly, when both the Chinese fundraising scandal and the Wen Ho Lee investigation became public knowledge, prominent Democrats such as Secretary Bill Richardson employed the diversionary argument that Republican attempts to discover the truth were "anti-Asian."

Not only has this race-baiting enjoyed considerable success with ethnic minorities, but because it implicitly targets the white American majority rather than minorities, it has largely escaped criticism or even reporting in the mainstream media. And because it has gone politically unpunished, it is appearing more and more often.

Despite Gore's appearance (and indeed displays) of rectitude, he has pandered more than most, even accusing poor Bill Bradley of implicit racism over his health plan. In part this is because the vice president is a highly partisan politician who takes advantage of every political opportunity that comes his way. And he has seen one crucial electoral fact to which the Republicans obstinately turn a blind eye—namely, that immigration greatly benefits the Democratic party by bringing in people who disproportionately vote Democratic. Indeed, it was the vice president's office that in the run-up to the 1996 election successfully pressured the Immigration and Naturalization Service into rushing hundreds of thousands of applicants for citizenship through the process without going through the legal necessity of FBI background checks. A full 11,000 applicants who were checked and found to be guilty of felonies were admitted into citizenship anyway! This was done quite plainly in order to increase the Democratic vote—something that might conceivably swing a narrow election.

But there is a broader issue of principle driving Gore's multicultural politics. He is often mocked for having mistranslated *E pluribus unum* as "out of one, many," when it actually means "Out of many, one." Though the mockery is justified, it should be observed that this gaffe had at least the virtue of sincerity. It is exactly the vision of a culturally Balkanized America that animates the modern American establishment, the Democratic party, and the vice president himself. And because that vision casts aside the common culture that would otherwise bind different ethnic groups together, it aggravates the inevitable tensions of a multiethnic society and so leads to policies like racial preferences, the liberal race-baiting of the Clinton years, and—yes—even Al Gore's personality infusions.

Will Gore, incidentally, put on an empathetic ethnic act when he addresses the Retired WASP Stockbrokers Association? And if he does, how will they tell? NR

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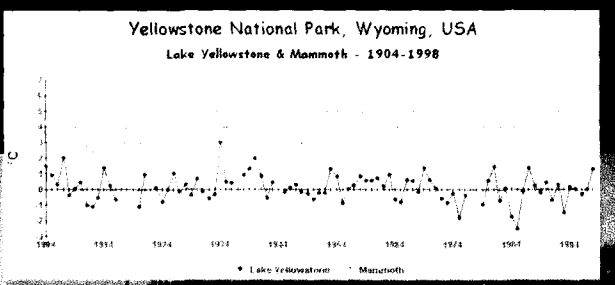
No evidence of global warming here.



A 94-year record of surface-based temperatures, compiled by NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, shows that there is no evidence of a warming trend in Yellowstone National Park. But wait, if global warming [illegible] no evidence here in Yellowstone? And elsewhere around the world? The truth is that the [illegible] record used to characterize global warming shows a false trend. The Greening Earth [illegible] data from temperature monitoring stations around the world. Examine the data [illegible] Visit **www.greeningearthsociety.org**

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The Racemonger

Gore at his worst

LINDA CHAVEZ

AL GORE'S mean streak is legendary—and it is never more in evidence than when the subject is race. He has called opponents of racial preferences (and this is just for starters) "hypocrites" and "modern apostles of apathy," who "call for the end of policies to promote equal opportunity." He claims that those who believe in color-blind justice "use their color blind the way duck hunters use their duck blind." Those who disagree with him on racial preferences and set-asides are not merely wrong—they are evil.

Gore was not always such a hothead about race. In his 16 years in Congress, he did not champion affirmative action, even voting on three occasions to oppose the use of racial quotas in higher education. By his own admission, the civil-rights movement largely passed him by. In 1964—when some of us whom Gore now accuses of "trying to roll back equal opportunity" were marching—Gore's activities were limited to dinnertime quarrels with his dad, then a U.S. senator. Apparently the son's debating skills were no match against Gore Sr.'s desire to be reelected (in their southern state of Tennessee) that year. The senator not only voted against final passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, but supported an 83-day Senate filibuster of the bill, which almost kept the legislation from being voted on at all.

By Roman Genn

Nonetheless, Gore Jr. now takes credit for persuading his father to support the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the 1968 fair-housing law. "My analysis is vulnerable to solipsism," Gore has said, as recounted by *Washington Post* reporters David Maraniss and Ellen Nakashima, "but I've actually at times thought that the renewed ferocity [that the elder Gore brought to later civil-rights debates] . . . may have been at least in a tiny part for me." Maybe. But the son, too, learned lessons from his father's civil-rights votes. Gore Sr. lost his 1970 reelection bid. "Later, when he reached Congress himself," Maraniss and Nakashima write, Gore Jr. "took pains not to repeat his father's mistake of getting too far in front of his constituents."

If Gore came late to an active role on civil-rights issues, he has made up for his early indifference in truculence. Following the Supreme Court's 1995 *Adarand* decision, a legal blow to racial preferences in federal contracting, and the passage of Proposition 209 in California, which banned racial preferences in education and government hiring and contracting, many observers believed that affirmative action was on the ropes. Even President Clinton acknowledged that this practice needed "mending"—though he never actually did any. But Gore took another approach. Rather than debate the merits of affirmative action, he took to demonizing those who oppose it.

I witnessed firsthand Gore's snarling. In December 1997, a few months after Clinton proposed a "national dialogue on race," the president invited a small group of conservatives to the White House to meet with him and the vice president for an informal discussion. While Clinton was respectful, even conciliatory, Gore was churlish throughout. Twice he told us, "I've disagreed with what I've heard here"—namely, arguments that government should treat everyone as an individual, neither discriminating nor preferring anyone because of skin color. But his only counter-argument was a straw man. "If you lived in a community that was 50 percent white, 50 percent black, . . . and the police force was 100 percent white," he asked, would the community be justified in "making affirmative-action efforts to open up a lot more positions on the police force for blacks?"

Of course, no such community exists in America today, as I politely told him. But this made no impression, and he launched into a tirade about racial prejudice. He spoke of a "vulnerability in human nature to prejudice" and argued that "evil lies coiled in the human soul." He further contended that "racial differences can serve as a trigger for unleashing hatred," citing the Japanese atrocities against the Chinese, the Hutu slaughter of Tutsis in Rwanda, and the conflict among ethnic and religious groups in the Balkans. Gore's implied message was as clear as it was appalling: Opposing racial preferences can lead to genocide.

Gore took up the same theme a month later, on Martin Luther King Day, speaking from the pulpit of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. "What is racism?" Gore asked. "Is it merely a mistake in reasoning, an erroneous conclusion based on faulty logic, which, once corrected, can be banished from human society? Or is it something much deeper and more powerful, more threatening and more persistent?" For his answer, Gore invoked Biblical authority: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." He quoted a famous hymn: "Once to every man and nation / Comes the moment to decide / In the strife for truth and falsehood / For the good or evil side." Those who "pretend that . . . all we need [is] to establish a color-blind society," said Gore, have clearly chosen to be on the side of

Ms. Chavez is president of the Center for Equal Opportunity and the former director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

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falsehood and evil. Lest his audience miss his point, Gore mocked, "We see through your color blind! Amazing grace also saved me! Was color-blind, but now I see!"

And it was not merely Al Gore but Jesus Christ himself, he suggested, who passes judgment on "people who willfully refuse to see the evidence before their eyes." Echoing Jesus, Gore preached: "Ye hypocrite, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; how is it that you do not discern this time?"

But if, in Gore's Book of Judgment, those who oppose racial preferences will rot in hell, he is much more forgiving of demagogues and inciters such as Al Sharpton. When asked by journalist Jeff Greenfield during a Democratic-primary debate whether he would condemn Sharpton's message, Gore said he did "condemn the language that [Sharpton] used," but added that "in America we believe in redemption and the capacity of all of our people to transcend limitations . . ." Besides, he continued, "there is a racial divide in the way people in different races perceive certain events. I would not be so quick to completely dismiss what [Sharpton] has to say about some of these issues."

Would a President Gore bring the same religious fervor to his enforcement of racial and ethnic preferences that he has brought to debates on this issue? Or is he merely a poseur, hoping his fire-and-brimstone rhetoric will turn out a larger than usual black-Democrat vote on Election Day? Either way, Al Gore has attempted to widen, not narrow, the racial divide in America—which is about the worst thing there is to say about him. **NR**

REMEMBER WHEN?

Tobacco

1984

Al Gore's sister dies of lung cancer.

February 26, 1988; *Newsday*

Four years after his sister's death, Gore tells tobacco farmers: "Throughout most of my life, I raised tobacco. I want you to know that with my own hands, all of my life, I put it in the plant beds and transferred it. I've hoed it, I've dug in it, I've sprayed it, I've chopped it, I've shredded it, spiked it, put it in the barn and stripped it and sold it."

1990

Six years after his sister's death, Gore is still accepting campaign contributions from the tobacco industry.

August 28, 1996; Gore speech to Democratic convention

An emotional Gore recounts his sister's death. "And that is why until I draw my last breath, I will pour my heart and soul into the cause of protecting our children from the dangers of smoking." In comments quoted in the *New York Times* (August 30, 1996), he attributes his continued support of tobacco interests to the fact that he "felt a numbness" after his sister's death. "It takes time to fully absorb the most important lessons in life."

Here Come the Judges

The courts in the balance

ROBERT H. BORK

BOTH George Bush and Al Gore are attempting to make the selection of judges an issue in the upcoming election. If they succeed, it will be one of the few times—perhaps the only time—the electorate has been moved by that issue. Gore has put the matter precisely: "In this election, the Supreme Court is at stake, [and] many of our personal liberties are at stake."

The question of judges is indeed a monumental one. It does not bear on national security, as missile defense and the readiness of the military do. Nor does it go to the vibrancy of the economy, as taxes and tax cuts do. Judicial selection merely goes to the heart of democratic government: the ability of Americans to govern themselves.

It is time, and past time, to be blunt about the rule of judges. Many of them bear less resemblance to judges than they do to commissars. How else would you characterize men and women who have assumed the power to decide the most serious cultural and social issues facing America, who will be in place long after the president who named them leaves office, and who are accountable to no one, particularly not to voters or elected representatives? The only accountability these "robed masters" should have is to the meaning of the Constitution, a meaning discerned by study of its text, structure, and history. If justices ignore those constraints, as many of them do, they govern according to their own tastes, and we have no way of resisting or altering the ukases they hand down. Whatever else may be said of it, the rule of judges without any plausible reference to the Constitution can hardly be called legitimate in a nation that was designed to be basically democratic.

The Supreme Court and the courts of appeals are at tipping points. The Supreme Court is more often liberal, undisciplined, and imperialistic than it is restrained; but it is capable of being moved in either direction by the next president's choice of justices. The courts of appeals, which are final for all but a tiny percentage of litigants, are similarly situated.

What would be the consequences of a Gore judiciary? He has made that clear, and his message does not augur well for republican, let alone conservative, values. For one thing, the abortion right cobbled up by the Court in *Roe* v. *Wade* would be entrenched for years, probably decades, to come,

Mr. Bork, a contributing editor of NATIONAL REVIEW, is the author of, among other books, *The Tempting of America* and *Slouching towards Gomorrah*.

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and would be broadened. Partial-birth abortion would be a firm constitutional right, without even the pretense that a ban including a mother's-health exception might make a difference. Other restrictions, such as parental notification where a minor is involved, would fall by the wayside. So fierce is Gore on this topic that he has said that a pregnant woman under sentence of death must have the choice whether to have her unborn baby killed with her. On abortion issues, Kate Michelman would in effect be the Supreme Court.

Homosexuality would be normalized. Questioned about the Court's recent 5-to-4 decision that the Boy Scouts may refuse to have homosexual scoutmasters, Gore replied that the issue should depend on whether the Scouts are a "public organization or sufficiently intertwined with public activities." There, presumably, goes any limitation on open homosexuals in the military. He went on: "I disagree with discrimination against gays and lesbians. I just think the time has come to end that discrimination." Moral disapproval of homosexual conduct would be outlawed in any public and many private contexts. Open-housing laws, for example, would forbid a landlady to turn away homosexual couples, and the Court would uphold that as constitutional. The Court is within one vote of producing these results now.

We may expect racial and sexual quotas to flourish in government and private employment and in the faculty and student composition of universities. As Thomas Sowell has shown in a study of other nations, once preferences are put into place, even though touted as transitional, they become permanent, expand to cover new "victim" groups, and produce great bitterness and even violence. Legislative districting by race and ethnic group will go forward unimpeded. There is no better prescription for the continued Balkanization of America.

Criminal-law enforcement will become weaker and less effective. *Miranda* warnings have now become constitutional requirements, but far more awaits an activist liberal Court. Justices presently on the Court favor an expansion of the exclusionary rule by which reliable evidence of guilt may not be used at trial if the police have acquired that evidence in a manner that is displeasing to squeamish justices. They are not comparably squeamish about turning loose criminals who will rob and kill again.

Similarly, the death penalty would likely be abolished by Court diktat. Liberals have frequently viewed death as "cruel and unusual punishment" forbidden by the Eighth Amendment, despite the fact that capital punishment is explicitly shown to be available several times in the Constitution.

The question of the constitutionality of school vouchers will shortly be before the Court. The crucial issue will be the provision of vouchers to children whose parents want them to attend schools with religious affiliations and training. No doubt the ACLU will sue, claiming that this is government support of religion that violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Though the Court has just permitted government donation of equipment to religious schools, the switch of one vote would almost surely outlaw voucher programs that a majority of Americans support and that are of particular importance to minority students trapped in the travesties called inner-city public schools. Al Gore and the Democrats are in thrall to the National Education Association, a teachers' union fiercely devoted to preserving its monopoly in the public schools. A Gore presidency thus surely means the destruction of voucher programs and with it the destruction of the hopes of many minority students.

Norman Podhoretz has explained America's immunity from the horrors that visited Europe in the 20th century by saying, "[T]he institutional structure of American democracy . . . provided a barrier against the terrible evils that could issue from even the most apparently benevolent utopian intentions. This institutional structure therefore must be defended . . ." The liberal bloc of justices now on the Supreme Court are utopians in the sense that they would remake the nation in keeping with universalistic principles of justice and equality, as they, rather than we, define those terms. The attempt to rein in a runaway liberal Court is a necessary defense of the institutional structure of American democracy.

Al Gore is the perfect modern liberal, with all that implies about rigid political correctness and willingness to use coercion to achieve liberalism's ends. The ideal instrument for carrying out that agenda is, of course, the Supreme Court. To the modern liberal, democracy is not a process but a long list of substantive results. If the electorate will not produce those results, a way must be found to force them on the electorate, willy-nilly. This is all too close to Bertolt Brecht's quip that the government has lost confidence in the people and a new people must be formed. The Supreme Court has been working assiduously at that, with more success than not. Gore wants to step up the pace.

The deepest corruption of the Clinton-Gore administration has been its unremitting assault on the rule of law. Every major executive-branch agency involved with law or its enforcement—the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Internal Revenue Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Justice—has been touched, and some of them imbued, with political corruption. Gore explicitly promises to accelerate the attack on the judiciary, particularly the Supreme Court. Without breaking stride, he simultaneously disapproves of litmus tests for judges and promises that his appointees will continue the charade of pretending that abortion is a right to be found in the Constitution. Abortion is a proxy for all the other attitudes that a Gore Supreme Court would enact as if they were fundamental law.

Al Gore is right about one central issue in this fall's election: The Supreme Court and our personal liberties are at stake. The fundamental liberty enshrined in the Constitution is the liberty to govern ourselves. Should Gore become president, greater and greater portions of that liberty will be lost. The liberal bloc of the Court is sublimely indifferent to the opinions of most Americans, to the Constitution, and to the laws that elected representatives enact. The pity of it is that the American electorate is supinely indifferent to these depredations. **NR**

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To Viktor, with Love

How Gore botched Russia policy

JOHN DIZARD

AL GORE can claim, with some justice, that he's had more hands-on foreign-policy experience than George W. Bush. The problem is, the key experience—his leading role in Russia policy—was a disaster: Gore built a close relationship with Viktor Chernomyrdin, who is not only that country's longest-serving prime minister, but also one of the richest civil servants of our time. You see, Chernomyrdin is one of the dozen or so leading criminals in Russia.

At this point, the half-smart foreign-policy think-tank people will murmur that it's a rough world, no omelet without breaking eggs, etc., etc. And yes, if the people Gore sponsored had made their personal fortunes in the process of creating a post-Communist Russian renaissance, we could cut them some slack on the ethics questions. But that's not what happened: Gore's friends robbed Russia of everything they could steal, in the middle of the worst depression experienced by any country in the 20th century. Oh, and they robbed us blind as well—which helped cause the global financial crisis (nearly a meltdown) of 1998.

Reuters

The Gore-Chernomyrdin alliance

Russia has 150 million people, most of them poor, and they got a lot poorer under the administration of Gore's friend Chernomyrdin. The complicity of the U.S. government in this process might come back to haunt us: America had an enormous fund of goodwill among the Russian people at the end of the Cold War; they saw us as the good guys who treated defeated enemies fairly. They don't think that now.

Gore's apologists—both the official ones, such as Leon Fuerth, his foreign-policy adviser, and the semi-official ones, such as David Hoffman, the Moscow correspondent of the *Washington Post*—offer self-contradictory defenses of Gore's complicity with the Russian mega-criminal class. The first is: What choice did we have? Hoffman quotes Fuerth: "Is the idea supposed to be that we should have boycotted the government of Russia for five years, because that was Chernomyrdin's time in office—or deal with him?"

This defense is a false choice. Of course the United States has to "deal with" the governments with which it has diplomatic relations; but if the official counterparts are notorious criminals such as Chernomyrdin, the dealings should be correct, practical, and cool. Gore went far beyond that, making Chernomyrdin a partner in a sort of Renaissance-Weekend-meets-world-government arrangement called the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission. This wasn't some low-profile "back channel" operation: Gore and Chernomyrdin appeared together in venues such as the *Charlie Rose* show, mooning over each other like 16-year-olds.

One of the trumpeted successes of this relationship was a 1993 deal to recycle Russian bombs through the U.S. reactor-fuel market. The deal turned out to be a dud. One element of this swords-for-ploughshares swap was a U.S. government sale of uranium-enrichment plants. But—because the deal turned out to be a money-loser for the new uranium company—the management announced in June that it would have to cancel the uranium-purchase contract with the Russians, and sign a new one that would lead to the shutdown of a uranium plant in Ohio.

The Gore apologists' response would be, "Who could have foreseen that?" The answer is, everyone else in the uranium industry—since you can forecast uranium demand and contract expirations fairly accurately. Unfortunately, Gore and his associates figured that spin would turn into reality; not the most rational way to make policy.

That brings us to the next defense of Gore, in which his handlers and apologists argue that he knew all along that corruption was a problem in Russia. Says Fuerth: "Anyone who deals with Russia at all understands there is a problem that is widespread. It was on the commission agenda." But Gore asserts that he *doesn't* know if the allegations about Chernomyrdin's own corruption are true.

Is it reasonable to believe Gore really didn't know what was happening? In a word, no. A friend of mine was visiting Chernomyrdin's own Imperial Bank—every civil servant should have his own bank—one afternoon in the heyday of the Gore-Chernomyrdin alliance. He found the officers and directors in a state of confusion. A bomb had gone off in front of the bank that morning, and it was understood that one of their business rivals was sending them a message. But the bank was involved in so many shaky deals with other criminals that they didn't know which deal was at issue. They'd been sent a message they couldn't understand.

That's the kind of thing that happens when, like Chernomyrdin, you do business with just about anyone who will pay you a $1 million fee just for a hearing. Chernomyrdin's main power base was Gazprom, the natural-gas monopoly and the biggest company in the country, over which he exercised direct control all the time he was prime minister. He and his partners used it to set up a parallel financing system (to compete with the foreign-loan/banking scam run by another Gore client, Anatoly Chubais). Chernomyrdin made hundreds of millions, if not billions, from his end of the rackets. The operation of these systems was familiar to tens of millions of

Mr. Dizard is a financial writer and editor living in New York.

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Russians. Among them, it is to be hoped, were one or two in contact with the CIA.

But they would have been informing a brick wall. Gore—through Fuerth—*had forbidden the CIA to investigate any corruption charges against Chernomyrdin*. Using the CIA in this manner is an abuse of power, by any reasonable standard. (When the *New York Times* found out about it, Gore and Fuerth flat-out lied about their role in suppressing intelligence.)

Chernomyrdin formally quit his Gazprom post in June. We can hope that his friend Gore will soon join him in retirement. **NR**

His Veep's Keeper

What Bill can do for (and to) Gore

DICK MORRIS

WILL October prove harmful to W. and other living things? Historically, a lame-duck president can wield great leverage over a presidential contest in his fading months in office if he chooses to do so. Eisenhower jumped into Nixon's 1960 campaign, creating a surge that left his vice president within a statistical-margin-of-fraud tie for the presidency. What will Bill Clinton do to help Al Gore in October?

He faces a basic choice: Will he act as campaigner-in-chief or behave in a soberly presidential manner in the last, crucial weeks? Will he barnstorm for his anointed successor or instead focus on adding to his record as president and bolstering his approval ratings?

In 1994, he made the wrong choice, campaigning for his fellow Democrats and driving them into oblivion. Clinton's low ratings in September and part of October forced him to the sidelines as his supporters fought for their political lives against insurgent Republicans ably commanded by Newt Gingrich. Then, toward the end of October, Clinton turned around his image by flying to the Middle East and presiding over an Arab-Israeli agreement. The signing ceremony in the desert made him look particularly presidential. His approval rating jumped ten points virtually overnight.

On his return, one week before the election, he called me and asked which states I thought he should visit to boost the fortunes of his congressional Democrats. "Go back to the Middle East," I counseled. But Clinton countered: "Before, I had low ratings and couldn't campaign for them without hurting them. But my ratings are ten points higher now, so I can help them."

"You'll help them in the short term," I answered, "but you'll lose the presidential image you developed in the Middle East, your ratings will drop, and you will end up hurting them."

"I have to go campaign for them. They risked their lives for me. It's the least I can do," he concluded as we hung up.

As Clinton toured the '94 battlegrounds, his approval ratings dropped day after day until they had returned to their historic lows of earlier that autumn. As the image of the peacemaker president faded and the partisan president took center stage, Clinton hurt himself—and his intended beneficiaries—with his every campaign stop. History records that Democrats looked pretty good before Clinton started his last-minute push at the end of that election. On Election Day, they were wiped out.

Will Clinton make the same mistake twice? He rarely does. While the man has few, if any, political instincts, he learns from his mistakes better than anybody else in politics. Since he has made just about every mistake there is to make in the course of his checkered career, he is now the functional equivalent of a political genius.

In October, Clinton will know that he should be burnishing his image, not for history, as many will assume, but for Gore. He will know that he should focus on foreign policy, the one area where quick triumphs are possible. Look for his immense charm to work wonders in the Middle East, Northern Ireland, North Korea, or Russia. Expect high-profile foreign visits where his ability to promote the cause of peace will be on display. President Clinton will remember how Clinton-as-politician undermined the Democrats' '94 campaign.

He will also realize that he must remain beneath the radar so as not to take the limelight away from Hillary. As Election Day approaches, Mrs. Clinton will be trying desperately to shed both her maiden name (because it is too feminist) and her married name (because it reminds people of *him*). She'll run as just Hillary, trusting that nobody will ask "Hillary who?" The last thing she will need is for her husband to be visible, out there campaigning and beating the Bushes.

So Bill Clinton will do the smart thing and remain above the fray, presidential to the end. Right?

Wrong. He won't be able to help himself. This man craves

Bill Clinton by David Smith

Mr. Morris, a *New York Post* columnist, was for 20 years an adviser to Bill Clinton.

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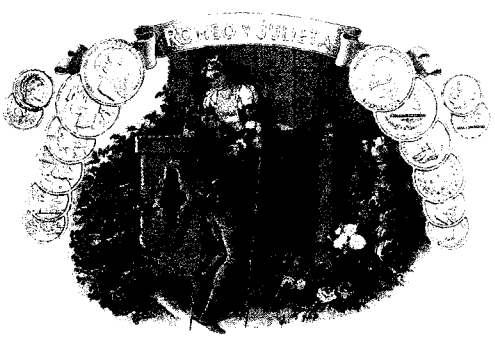
Act 1, Scene 1



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crowds more than he ... es sex. He needs the approval of the masses like an alcoholic n ...ds a drink. Without the energy of the mob, he feels depleted, a... thetic, listless. Entropy sets in, and he falls into a black hole o... anky depression. He needs the cheers. He won't be able to resi... one last all-nighter touring cities, hearing the applause, batt... g in adulation. The prospect of feeling that energizing fatigue again and bathing in sweat as he presses the flesh will be too a... pealing for him to resist.

In September, he'll remain aloof. In October, he'll pull off presidential achievements to build his image. His ratings will rise and his legacy will shine. Gore and Hillary will profit from his rise. He'll be on top of his game.

Then he'll blow it all in a massive act of self-indulgence. He'll pretend it is because the attacks on his record are too much to bear. But, really, it will be the silence in the White House at night that will drive him crazy. The quiet walls and the empty halls will force him out of doors into the streets, the rallies, the mobs, the media, the limelight. There he will bask, narcissistic to the end as his ratings fall, his image becomes again too political, and his vice president and First Lady find the wind in their faces and not at their backs once more.

It will be 1994 all over again. One more rally. One more state. One more press conference. One more speech. As his voice gets husky, his eyes will get misty, as he goes for that tantalizingly elusive good feeling—one more time. After the election, when his campaigning will have so injured his closest friends, he will rant and blame others. It will be the fault of his staff that prodded him into campaigning. He will retroactively tell all who will listen that *he* tried to stay away but that *they* wouldn't let him. He will blame everyone but himself because he won't be able to face the reality then any more than he can face it now—the reality that his addictions will destroy him. **NR**

REMEMBER WHEN?

Campaign-Finance Reform

February 15, 1984; *Wall Street Journal*

"I'm a strong supporter of PAC participation in the political process . . . I do need to raise large sums of money, and I have enjoyed getting involved with the PAC community."

March 27, 2000; Gore speech

"In 1970, my father lost his Senate seat—in part because of the special-interest money . . . I learned a powerful lesson about American politics from my father—a lesson I tried to sum up in one of my first contributions to the public debate as a freshman congressman in 1978, when I argued that campaign-finance reform 'is one of the most important steps we can take to return government to the people.' In that first term in Congress, I began an effort to persuade my colleagues and my constituents that as long as 'special-interest money control[s] campaign funding, the public interest will suffer.'"

How Gore Can Win

Bracing for disaster

JOHN J. MILLER

FIVE years ago, the *Wall Street Journal* predicted, "Bill Clinton will lose to any Republican nominee who doesn't drool on stage." If politics were football, this would have been the sort of statement Team Clinton might have posted on its locker-room bulletin board. Today the line is recognized as a classic example of reading from a broken crystal ball. Bob Dole fell off a stage once, but he was never seen drooling on one. In fact, he hasn't been seen anywhere at all recently, except in Viagra ads.

Republicans have managed to avoid appearing overconfident this time around. Yet that hasn't prevented most Americans from assuming another President Bush is in their future. Polls show that no matter whom they plan to vote for, more than half of the public thinks there will be a new Bush administration come January. Only a third of them believe Vice President Gore will win a promotion. Many Democrats are downright gloomy about their candidate. Last year, Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan endorsed Bill Bradley. "Nothing is the matter with Mr. Gore except that he can't be elected president," he explained. "The distance behind George W. Bush is now 19 points."

Well, it's much less than that today. Most polls give Bush a single-digit advantage over Gore. Even that may erode. A summertime lead in the polls means little—just ask President Dukakis. In fact, there's every reason to suppose that Gore not only can be elected in November, but that he will be elected.

It takes a close look at individual states to detect Gore's latent strength. *The Hotline*'s electoral scoreboard of state-by-state polls shows Bush ahead in 32 states worth 357 electoral votes (270 are needed to win). But half of these electoral votes come from states where Bush is within the margin of error, meaning that pollsters themselves consider it entirely reasonable that Gore is actually ahead in these places. If Gore carries every state where he currently leads, plus the ones where he's now within the margin of error, he racks up 286 electoral votes. In other words, the presidential race is very, very close—right now.

One of the states Gore will grab in this scenario is New Jersey, considered one of six or seven key states. The latest poll there, taken in June, has Bush up by a single point, 35 percent to 34 percent. But to put New Jersey in the Bush column overlooks the presence of Democratic Senate candidate Jon Corzine, who just spent $37 million—including $34 million from his own pocket—to win his primary. He'll certainly be on the airwaves this autumn, but New Jersey's huge media

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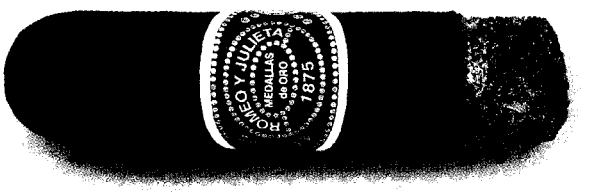
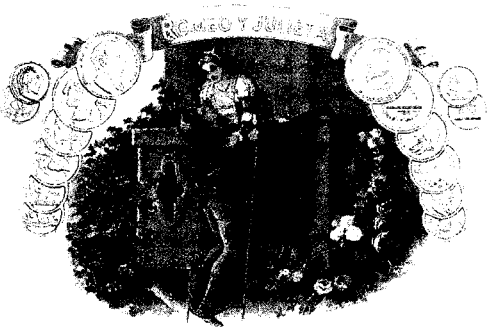
Act 2, Scene 2



Parting is such sweet sorrow.



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expenses (both its major markets are based in cities outside its borders) make get-out-the-vote campaigns especially attractive. Corzine's efforts surely won't produce many Bushies.

■

The story of Gore, racing from behind in this Olympic year like a reincarnated Bruce Jenner, will have a built-in appeal.

■

Perhaps Bush doesn't need to win New Jersey. But he'd sure like to take Michigan. Its voters have picked the winning candidate in every race since 1980 (they went for favorite son Gerald Ford four years before). The latest poll there also has Bush ahead, 45 percent to 40 percent. But again Gore has hidden assets. This year, for the first time, Election Day is a paid holiday for the United Auto Workers. Then there's the school-choice initiative. Michigan's conservative governor, John Engler, came out against it last year because he fears it will boost Democratic turnout and hurt Republican candidates in the state. One analysis predicts that 10 percent more Democrats than usual will vote, in large part because of teacher-union efforts. When swing states like Michigan start to slip away, so do Bush's election hopes.

Bush may be in for another surprise following the Democratic convention. One reason he continues to lead Gore in national polls is that his support among Republicans is much higher than Gore's is among Democrats—89 percent versus 77 percent, according to a CBS poll in July. In addition, Gore isn't running especially well among blacks, either—he's at 71 percent, according to an NBC/*Wall Street Journal* survey, when he ought to be doing 15 points better. But all this should be easy ground for him to make up. Kate O'Beirne has argued in these pages that Gore won't get there because white, working-class voters aren't fond of him. Clearly, if Gore fails in this task, Bush will win. But Austin is already putting out the word that it expects a 5-point bounce for Bush after Philadelphia, and thinks Gore will jump 10 points after L.A. Sounds like a dead heat by Labor Day.

Then a whole series of factors that favor Gore comes into play. The issues on which this election is likely to turn—Social Security, education, health care—are traditionally Democratic strengths. Bush is doing well with them now, but he has yet to survive a negative ad blitz crafted by Gore media man Bob Shrum. Expect President Clinton to get involved, too. He has a patent interest in the race if only because he wants Gore to appoint the next attorney general. There's also the White House's ability to manufacture an October Surprise—or several of them. It could produce a Mideast peace deal, apprehend terrorist Osama bin Laden, or rout conservatives (again) during budget negotiations. If Madeleine Albright starts complaining about Saddam Hussein in September, cancel your vacation plans in Baghdad.

The media's role also is huge. Bush has enjoyed relatively good coverage, certainly better than Gore's, in recent months. He can now expect it to get much worse. Forget the fact that the vast majority of political reporters are self-described liberals. They have a professional interest in Gore's closing the gap if only because they want something interesting to write about between now and November. And what a great story that would be. Americans love underdogs. They cherish comebacks. The story of Gore, racing from behind in this Olympic year like a reincarnated Bruce Jenner, will have a built-in appeal. Okay, now remember the fact that the vast majority of political reporters are self-described liberals.

Then there's The Blunder. "This election is one gaffe away from a turnaround," says Marshall Wittmann of the Heritage Foundation. Bush's primary opponents all expected the governor to make some fatal mistake, along the lines of Ford's Warsaw Pact debate flub in 1976. Their hopes were dashed, but the low-level, late-night buzz remains that Bush is a over-indulged frat boy who has coasted through life and certainly isn't ready for the Oval Office. All it would take is a single Dan Quayle moment to undo him.

Bush has run a cautious and disciplined campaign so far. He has proven himself to be a much better candidate than even many of his partisans could have hoped. Which makes now a perfect moment to short-sell Bush's stock. **NR**

REMEMBER WHEN?

Gay Rights

April 16, 1981; *Manchester* (Tenn.) *Times*
On homosexuality: "I think it is wrong. I don't pretend to understand it, but it is not just another normal optional lifestyle."

October 17, 1984; *The Tennessean*
"I don't pretend to have an understanding of homosexuality that sustains a discussion of its roots . . . but I do not believe it is simply an acceptable alternative that society should affirm."

October 28, 1984; *The Tennessean*
Gore says that he would not accept campaign funds from homosexual groups, and opposes "the so-called 'gay bill of rights.'"

October 13, 1987; UPI
"I also do not think we need a bill to protect the specific category—that is, sexual preference."

September 19, 1998; Gore speech to gay-rights group Human Rights Campaign
"The cause we celebrate tonight is not some narrow, special interest. It is really the cause that has defined this nation since its founding . . . It is an outrage that today, in 1998, in 40 states of our union, it is 100 percent legal to fire a hard-working employee just because they are gay or lesbian. That is profoundly wrong. . . . So I say to Congress: Let's give everyone who is willing to work for it a fair and equal chance to succeed. Pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act into law."

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- The heavenly Jerusalem, and the End of Time
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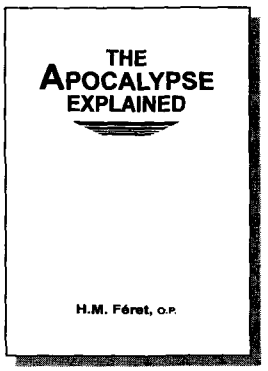

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'For Selfish Purposes'

Gore as campaigner

BOB ZELNICK

WHEN Al Gore's fellow Tennessean Andrew Jackson was nominated for the presidency in 1828, he pretty much stayed at home, declining at first even to discuss such key issues as federal appropriations for roads and canals. He had been in the public spotlight for a long time, Jackson reasoned. His positions and his character were well known. "Was I now to come forward and reiterate my public opinions on these subjects," he said, "I would be charged with electioneering for selfish purposes."

By contrast, Al Gore has developed a reputation for taking positions on everything under the sun, and maybe even the sun itself. Typically, these are lengthy, detailed, complex positions—and they are always subject to change, as the political situation requires.

Even more striking about Gore's career than the well-chronicled changes and inconsistencies are the fundamental structural weaknesses that have carried over from one campaign to the next. In saying this, I exclude the past two presidential contests, when Gore was harnessed to a political genius, and look instead to 1988, when he last sought the presidency in his own right.

Common to both Gore's presidential campaigns has been the lack of any figure of authority at the top. Fred Martin, a former Mondale middleweight, was the nominal '88 campaign manager, but his voice was one of many. It would take a Sherlock Holmes to unravel the mystery of which media adviser—if any—was shaping Gore's message at any time and developing spots to drive it home. Various media men showed up at the behest of Gore, or his father, or others. David Garth, compliments of Ed Koch, took over the critical New York campaign and made Gore sound like a right-wing Likud candidate for the Knesset.

"We had conflicting advice from different advisers, and a not totally well-grounded candidate hearing all these different versions of what he should do," former chief of staff Roy Neel recalled. "It is almost impossible to say how any of the critical decisions were made because there was no structure at the time."

This time around the early lack of structure and direction was so palpable that Gore took the risky step of bringing in the scandal-ridden Tony Coelho as campaign chairman. By mid June, however, Coelho was out, replaced by commerce secretary William M. Daley. The stated reason was ill health. But background reports indicated that Gore and Coelho disliked each other, and that Coelho was not on the same wavelength as his colleagues. The *New York Times* zeroed in on the real significance of Coelho's departure: It showed "how even after years of preparation, the vice president still has had trouble assembling a stable inner circle to run his organization."

The reason that ciphers and damaged goods have found their way to the top of the Gore campaigns reflects another consistency between Gore in 1988 and Gore in 2000—his inability to delegate meaningful authority. Fred Martin called him "a control freak" who would phone from the road six to eight times a day appropriating every decision, from Tipper's schedule to carpools. "He spent an enormous amount of time handling crap," complained Martin. A *Times* piece in June of this year had Gore—in marked contrast to George W. Bush—still designing campaign logos, intruding into arcane policy formulations, and clipping obscure material from the daily newspapers in order to generate new staff work.

Gore is, of course, a smart man. But he is not the first smart man to run for president. What makes his conduct unusual is that most of these smart men have managed to rely on staff people they trust to write speeches, reduce policy determinations to specific positions, prepare media spots, clip papers, and handle travel schedules for themselves and assorted surrogates. They do this so they can concentrate on tasks to which most candidates are uniquely suited: developing broad themes, presenting them effectively to critical constituencies, meeting key opinion-makers face-to-face, and making the sort of do-or-die decisions under deadline pressure that confront the typical campaign.

When you immerse yourself in minutiae as Gore did in 1988 and as he appears to be doing today, you tend to lose focus, to react to too many things because you insulate yourself from none of them, to split the difference between competing advisers rather than give your top lieutenants the authority to bring discipline and cohesion to your effort. This in turn leads to sharp changes in style and substance, to perilous inconsistencies, to charges of political opportunism, or, in Andrew Jackson's words, of "electioneering for selfish purposes."

Gore's 1988 campaign was a case study in political U-turns. When he delivered his formal declaration of candidacy from the steps of the courthouse in Carthage, Tenn., he seemed to be flagging the ozone layer and global warming as critical issues in his campaign. Then, with the Super Tuesday primaries in the South in mind, he became the son of Old Dixie, a defense-minded, tough old dirt farmer who could restore his party's traditional base. Next it was the guy in the flannel shirt hitting themes of interest to rank-and-file working people. Then it was on to New York and the anti–Jesse Jackson, pro-Israel campaign.

This time around, the shifts have involved more persona than policy. Gore's transition from the blue-suited guy in the Clinton photo-op to the occasional critic of the president was fitful and awkward. More awkward still were his attempts to define policy differences with his administration—over Elián González, over appeasing Big Labor—

Mr. Zelnick is a professor of journalism at Boston University and the author of *Gore: A Political Life*.

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while preparing to take the stump to claim credit for the administration's economic successes.

Since Gore was eliminated fairly early in 1988, he faces one or two problems today, as the Democratic nominee, that are new to him. The first appears to be residual bad feeling among both the media and the electorate for his bruising campaign against Bill Bradley. The former New Jersey senator was, for all his athletic prowess, the 97-pound weakling, the kid in the schoolyard with the horn-rimmed glasses and the knapsack full of books who not only can't fight but recoils at the very concept of a scrap. Belt him even once, and you're a bully. Knock him silly, and the other kids pine for the day when some new tough guy comes along to settle the score.

In contrast, George Bush's primary opponent, Sen. John McCain, was himself a pretty tough guy, so the battle, while at times brutal, was a match between equals.

Second, there is Gore's continuing delicate legal situation arising from his questioning by Robert J. Conrad Jr., the head of the Justice Department's campaign-finance unit, regarding his 1996 visit to the Hsi Lai Buddhist Temple. Conrad has become the third senior law-enforcement official to recommend appointment of an independent counsel to investigate fundraising irregularities by the vice president. When that news became public, Gore promptly released a transcript of the interrogation, in which he denied advance knowledge that the Temple gathering was a fundraising event. His defense is of the "It depends on what the meaning of the word 'is' is" variety championed by Bill Clinton.

Lawyers may debate Gore's legal vulnerability, but his political vulnerability is clear. A decision by attorney general Janet Reno to appoint an independent counsel would spell death for Gore's presidential effort. A decision by Conrad to bring charges if he, as head of the Justice Department team, were given that discretion would have a similar impact. Neither of these outcomes is likely; but neither of them can be ruled out.

Gore may yet rally, forge ahead of Bush, and capture the office. But my sense is that should this happen it will be because Bush fails through his campaign or debate performance to establish his credibility as a potential president. Al Gore has given him every opportunity to take command. And he has done so largely because, since 1988, he has, like the Bourbon kings, learned little and forgotten little. **NR**

REMEMBER WHEN?

Al Said . . .

Sen. Al Gore to Rep. Richard Gephardt in a Democratic-primary debate, February 18, 1988:

"I'm going to lay it on the line here, Dick . . . The next president of the United States has to be someone the American people can believe will stay with his convictions."

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The Problem with Al

Jerk, pretender, fraud

ROB LONG

WE'VE heard it a thousand times: At home, around the dinner table, he's a charming and effortless host. And funny. And straight-arrow honest. And hip. "Friends are puzzled by the Al Gore they see campaigning around the country," begin the inevitable What's-wrong-with-Gore? newspaper accounts. Occasionally, the "friends" cited are ill-concealed fellow Democratic politicians, but more often they are journalists themselves—CNN pundits and *Washington Post* reporters who want so much to like Gore, and are so confused by his strange hustings persona that they have manufactured a news story about it.

And the stories are all the same: "Longtime associates" and "close friends" will say that the Gore who hired Naomi Wolf and flip-flops on everything and cannot answer a simple yes-or-no question is not the Gore *they* know. The Gore who drones condescending lectures out on the stump isn't the Gore they had rosemary-focaccia sandwiches with just last Tuesday. The Gore who can't pick a campaign manager and stick with him for longer than eight weeks isn't the Gore who sings funny made-up songs 'round the campfire. The Gore who broke campaign-finance laws and then lied about it isn't *their* Gore, the good-old-Al, let's-play-Boggle-after-sorting-our-recyclables guy who likes to work out with weights and listen to the Grateful Dead. They cannot understand why the Al Gore they all find so likable is so disliked.

What's wrong with Al Gore? Why are his negative poll ratings so solidly stuck in the 40s? The assorted "strategists" and "family friends" finger something called "Clinton fatigue"—the almost counterintuitive suggestion that the support of a popular sitting president is somehow tainting. A country weary of scandal has pinned the tail on the vice president, goes the thinking. How ironic, say "Gore intimates" and "Beltway observers," that it's Al Gore—family man, environmentalist, ramrod decent—who's wearing the tin hat in the lightning storm.

But does anyone doubt that if Bill Clinton himself—the creator of the eponymous "fatigue"—somehow, some way found a loose thread in the Constitution, pulled it, and unraveled enough of it to run for a third term—Could happen! The guy is very, very good at that kind of thing!—does anyone seriously doubt that he'd be five points up in the battleground states and maybe, maybe, pulling ahead in Texas? People don't dislike Gore because he reminds them of Clinton; they dislike Gore because he *doesn't* remind them of Clinton. When Clinton strides into a room and grabs the mike, hugs the fat lady, talks for 20 extemporaneous minutes, wolfs down a pulled-pork sandwich, and shuffles off to the next backwater district, you know he's loving every minute of it. He's doing it because he needs it: The campaign trail is his bacon double cheeseburger and zaftig big-haired intern all rolled into one, and he's going to savor every last greasy moment of it. No one loves being loved more than our rascally, callow, charming president.

When Gore grabs the mike, you instinctively think, "Uh oh." When he hugs the fat lady, they both look creeped out. And when he uses his growling I'm-gettin'-into-it voice, the effect is so discomfiting that it's hard not to look away in embarrassment. Watch the tape of Gore speaking at the NAACP convention in Baltimore. His stemwinding preacher voice develops a very distinct *Driving Miss Daisy* quality. Watch the smiles freeze on the faces of his audience. See those on the dais shift uncomfortably in their seats. Notice his head, sliding from side to side on his extremely white shoulders in a weird, off-putting imitation of every young black woman who has ever appeared on a bad TV talk show. You half expect him to say, "You go, girl!"

A few years ago, I heard a stand-up comedian talk about his itinerant, womanizing, ne'er-do-well father. The father, apparently, was quite something—a white-trash version of the dad in *Angela's Ashes*. When he wasn't drunk, he wasn't around; and when he *was* around, he dispensed rotten, amoral advice to his adoring young son. "Kiddo," he drunkenly slurred one day, "lemme tell you something. Remember this when you're older. I don't care if it costs you all your money, your wife, your kids—whatever. But when you're on a hot [sexual] streak, you've *got to ride it out!*" His father's counsel, for some reason, struck home. For a boy his age, the father must have seemed impossibly glamorous. So for a large part of his young adult life, the comedian lived just that way: irresponsible, promiscuous, chasing women at every opportunity—in other words, trouble.

His father, though, could carry it off with just enough charm to keep the sheriff at bay. His son, sadly, didn't have the right amount of twinkle in his eye to play the devilish, lovable rake. "I just looked like a jerk," he said. "A big, fat jerk."

And that, in a nutshell, is Al Gore's problem. Whether talking about Medicare in spook-the-old-folks sound bites or intoning gospel-style at the NAACP convention, he just looks, well, like a jerk. Like a salesman trying to scare Grandma out of her vote, or a white guy trying to talk black to show how cool he is. He looks like the kind of guy who commissions a focus group to edit his wardrobe. He looks like the kind of person who would use a family tragedy—the death of a sister, say, or a child's being struck by a car—in a political speech and somehow manage to cheapen both family tragedies *and* political speeches.

Because "Dad" got away with so much—lying under oath, chasing interns, raising money illegally—the "son" thinks he can too. Because "Dad" got away with asking for a definition of the word *is*, the "son" tries to get away with wondering what the term "fundraiser" really means. Gore has all the symptoms of an emotionally battered child—twisted loyalties, multiple personalities, and no sense of self. Like every drunken bad-

Mr. Long, a writer for television in Hollywood, is a contributing editor of NATIONAL REVIEW.

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example dad, Clinton slips through life unscathed, while the son, following in his footsteps, gets creamed.

Clinton, though, for all of his faults, is an authentic character and not without a certain amount of courage. It was his sheer gall, in the end, that carried him through impeachment. His post-ordeal popularity is a sign of the grudging, carefully delineated respect the American people give him for toughing it out. Next to him, Gore seems tinny and shrill, inauthentic, childish, *dishonest*. Clinton may be a liar, but Gore is a fraud. And, sadly for Gore, the American people can adjust to a liar but cannot stomach a fraud. It is the difference between genuine charm and manufactured emotion; it is the difference between the real, however unattractive, and the fake; it is, ultimately, the difference between Frank Sinatra and Frank Sinatra Jr.

Maureen Dowd, the deeply confused *New York Times* columnist, pegged Gore early as a version of the brown-nosing Eddie Haskell from TV's *Leave It to Beaver*. But even here, Gore is a Clinton-come-lately. As any *Leave It to Beaver* expert will tell you, Eddie Haskell had a certain eerie charm. He'd slither into the Cleaver kitchen with his sickly-sweet grin and greet Mrs. Cleaver with a totally transparent "You look *lovely* today, Mrs. Cleaver," and she—no fool she, Mrs. Cleaver, the only woman in a house of men—she'd smile, amused by this oily attempt at charm, and point him upstairs, to Wally and the Beaver's room. Eddie Haskell is just one of the multiple incarnations of Bill Clinton—along with the accident-prone Beaver and the (in high school, anyway) hapless Lumpy.

No, the television character who most resembles Al Gore is the charmless and unlikable Margaret, the unpretty girl-next-door on *Dennis the Menace* who never quite fits in with the gang. Either she's too pushy or she's a tattletale or she's just plain jerky—in any case, no one really wants to play with her. The other Margaret on the national scene, Hillary Clinton, is just as lost as Gore. Her negative poll ratings remain in the "I hate her" zone, and her every icy smile and mirthless laugh reminds people that she is not her husband.

All drunken louts leave devastation in their wake. And Bill Clinton leaves his two political legacies—his vice president and his wife—frantic and confused like two rats in a coffee can. His masterstroke of self-preservation—a thundering shift to the right after the ferocious thrashing of the '94 elections—yielded concrete, conservative results: more free trade, welfare reform, a balanced budget. But lost were the House, the Senate, about a dozen governorships, and the soul of the Democratic party. We are now treated to the spectacle of a pro-union yet pro-free-trade, NAACP-endorsed yet welfare-reforming, one-hundred-thousand more out-of-control race-profiling cops on the street Democratic party vying for suburban moderates, blue-collar workers, and the urban poor, a coalition that hasn't existed since 1976. Dad, happy, besotted, snores blissfully on the couch. Mom copes, by slipping into deep denial—"Everything's fine, the marriage is fine, things are going great, I've never been happier." The son breaks into Dad's liquor cabinet and takes the family car out for a joyride. That's the way it is in dysfunctional families, and that's the way it is in Campaign 2000.

It's a sad sight—the vice president crisscrossing the country in a desperate effort to reclaim the magic, to tap the empty keg and get the party moving again. Doesn't he know that Dad already lapped up all the booze and chased all the broads? Doesn't he know that the party's over? In more ways than one? **NR**

■ **GORE IN ACTION** ■

What If Dan Quayle Said That?

Vice President-elect Al Gore, visiting Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, pointed to some small busts on the wall, and asked "Who are these people?" The tour guide explained, "That's George Washington, on the right." Gore then "flashed a sheepish look." (AP, January 17, 1993)

About Chicago Bulls superstar Michael Jordan, Gore said: "I tell you that Michael Jackson is unbelievable, isn't he? He's just unbelievable." (*Chicago Tribune*, June 17, 1998)

At a Hollywood party, Gore told Courtney Love that he was a fan. "Yeah, right," she said. "Name a song, Al." Gore responded, "I can't name a song, I'm just a really big fan." (*Times* of London, October 1, 1998)

About Milwaukee's ethnic melting pot, Gore said, America "can be *e pluribus unum*—out of one, many." (*Washington Post*, January 10, 1994)

"We all know the leopard can't change his stripes." (*Toronto Sun*, November 19, 1995)

While inspecting ice-storm damage in Maine, "Gore picked up a fallen power line—which is exactly what officials at Central Maine Power had urged people not to do." (*Portland Press Herald*, July 19, 1998)

In a column in the *Carthage Courier* (April 14, 1981), **Rep. Al Gore wrote: "Exactly 200 years ago James Garfield was killed in a railway station; almost 100 years later Abraham Lincoln was killed." (For the record: Garfield died not in 1781, but in 1881—16 years after Lincoln's death.)**

Last year, the vice president introduced himself to his former Senate colleague, Pat Moynihan, at a reception. "Hello, I'm Al Gore," he said to the "bemused New York senator." (David Broder, *Washington Post*, July 14, 1999)

"You know [former president] George Bush thought Dec. 7 was Pearl Harbor Day." (AP, October 21, 1988)

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D.C.

July 26, 2000

To: All Short List Campers
From: Al
RE: Last few questions

Hi there, Short Listers! By now you've all submitted your completed and verified tax returns from 1980 to 2000, and you've met with our people to review any discrepancies that may have arisen. Thanks to you all for a super job! And thanks for being so patient during Jesse's lengthy session with the forensic accountant. Please rest assured that the magazines in the waiting room will be updated ASAP, in time for the cycle of medical evaluations about to begin.

(Note to Kathleen Kennedy Townsend: We are going to provide you with a female medical practitioner for the multi-day physical exam, but the dental exam will be conducted by a male dentist. Hope this is okay with you.)

Are we having fun yet?!

Please note that today's "fun run" is *not* optional. This is a chance to see how you do on a short photo-op jog alongside me, so please—no tight running shorts, no lycra, no logo-item clothing. There *will* be a camera test, gang, so try to look your best. What we're going for here is a "candidate and his running mate vigorously exercising together" type thing, so nothing fancy, but you will work up a sweat. (Yes, this includes you, Jesse!) Hair and makeup *will not* be provided, so come *camera-ready!*

This afternoon's lecture is entitled "Gore's Vision: A 2000 Odyssey" and will be delivered by me, followed by a Q&A session, in which I will do my best to answer as many of my questions as I have time for.

Tonight, before vespers, Tipper and I are going to have an informal "What to Expect from the Steamboat Tour" chat. As you know, right after the convention, we're all going on a steamboat tour through the battleground states in the South. Tipper and I will be leading an orientation on seasickness, stateroom etiquette, and the six-inches-behind-me rule. Everyone is required to attend! *This means you too, Jesse!*

Don't forget! Tomorrow, 6:00 A.M.: prayer-breakfast training. Free time until lunch. Tomorrow night: sweat lodge! (Clothing optional.)

There has been some grumbling about the grueling nature of the physical and emotional tests we're putting all Short List Campers through. I want to make it clear that *any* and *all* negative comments will be noted and remembered during the crucial "team-player competition" on the final day. As you know, this is the most challenging event of the week here at Short Listers Camp, and those campers who have displayed less-than-stellar team-player characteristics throughout the other events will be required to carry a load of potatoes, roughly me-sized, across hot coals. On the other hand, those who have displayed high team-player attributes will be allowed to move directly to the final "Talk Show Defense" event, where they will be required to answer tough questions about my fund-raising irregularities, propensity for lying, and past support of the tobacco industry. (Please, everyone, thank Tim Russert for graciously agreeing to participate in this event!)

Some of you (yes, Dick Gephardt, the walls have ears!) have been talking a lot amongst yourselves about leaving early, quitting camp, saying things like "I don't need this" and "this is going too far." Look, I know Short Listers Camp is tough—it has to be. The vice presidency is a tough job. Trust me: I wouldn't ask you to do anything that wasn't totally germane to the job.

Let me just close by saying that at last night's campfire social, as I looked around in the firelight at this terrific group of Short Listers, my heart swelled with pride—pride in myself, that I gathered all of you together for this unforgettable week, but also pride in you all, for being so devoted and loyal to me. Only one of you will make it to the "silver circle," but I want you all to know that to me, you're all winners. It's an honor just to have been invited to Short Listers Camp, as I know you all realize.

Good luck to all! Remember: square dancing tonight!

Al (DA BOSS!)

Best Attitude in Camp
George Mitchell
Kathleen Kennedy Townsend
Bob Graham

Need Improvement
Jesse Jackson
Evan Bayh
Dick Gephardt

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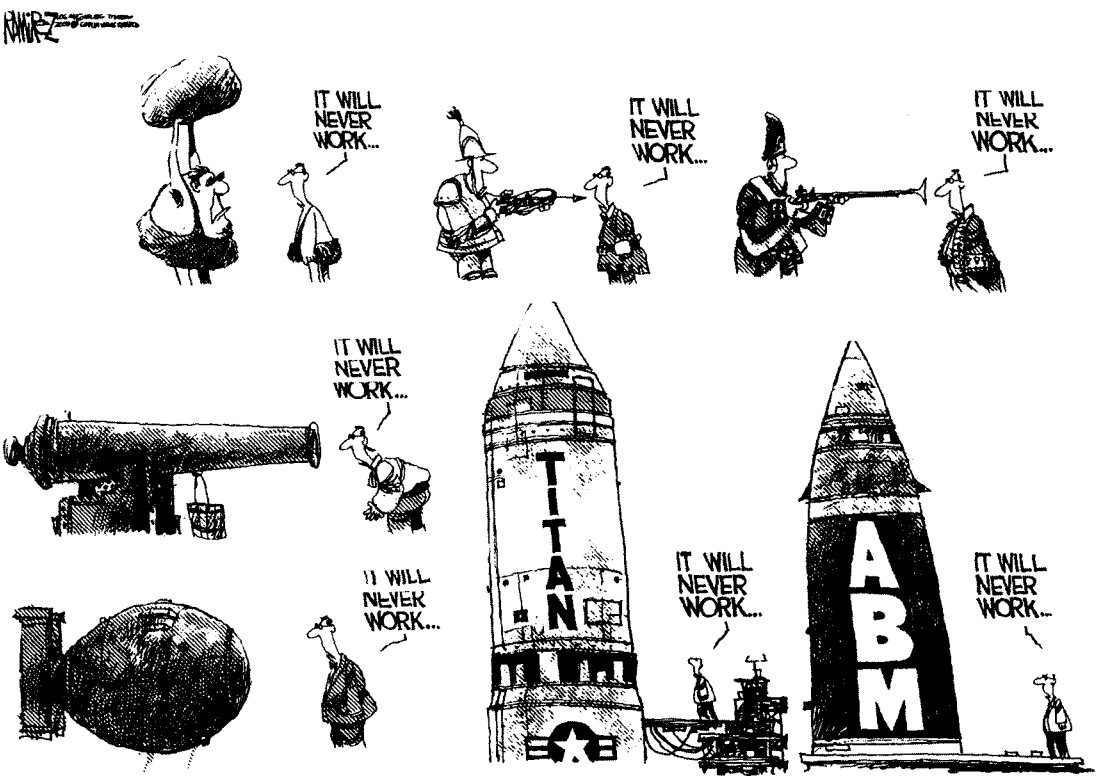

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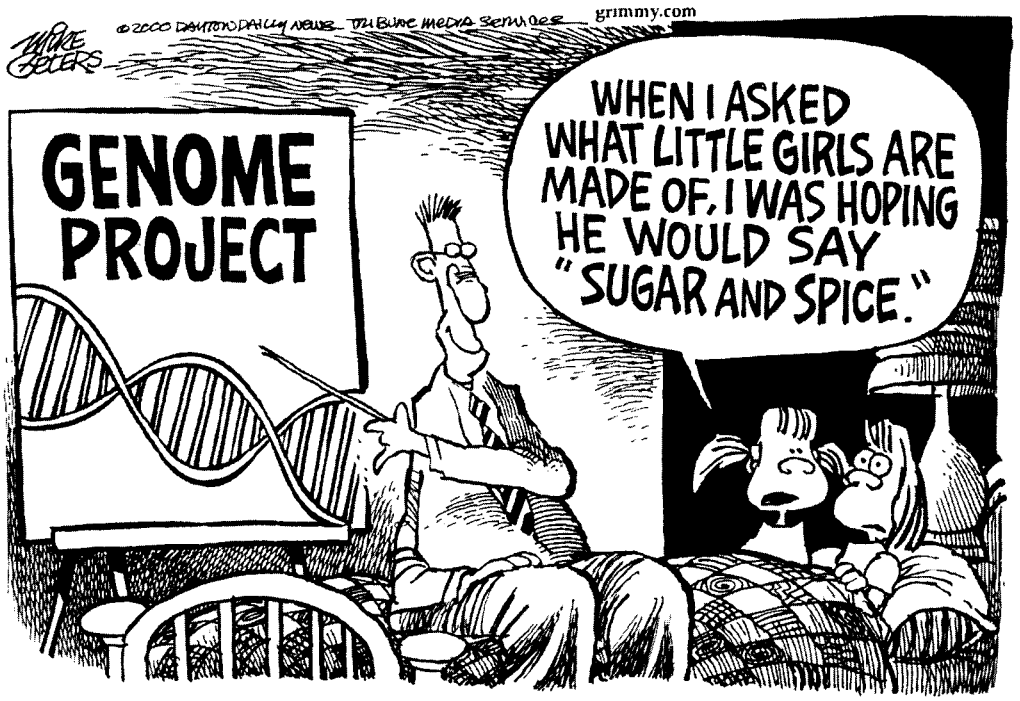
"Thank you for calling the IRS. To surrender, press 'one.' To apologize, press 'two.' To beg for mercy, press 'three.' To turn in a friend, press . . ."

Saint Hillary

She's never had an impure thought.
In neighborhoods where bad boys fought,
She never told tales out of school
Or tinkered with The Golden Rule;
And just because the girl can swear
Until the air curls hubby's hair
Does not imply rude racial slurs
Could slip past dentures sweet as hers.

—W. H. von Dreele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GENOME PROJECT
WHEN I ASKED WHAT LITTLE GIRLS ARE MADE OF, I WAS HOPING HE WOULD SAY "SUGAR AND SPICE."

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Give Rudy His Due

JOHN PODHORETZ

Rudy! An Investigative Biography of Rudolph Giuliani, by Wayne Barrett, assisted by Adam Fifield (Basic, 498 pp., $26)

Rudy Giuliani: Emperor of the City, by Andrew Kirtzman (Morrow, 333 pp., $25)

THERE'S nothing more maddening for an ideologue than the success of a politician with whom he disagrees. That success threatens to call into question every one of his cherished beliefs—about the nature of the electorate, about the laws of politics he believes he knows better than ordinary folk, and, most frightening of all, about the validity of the ideology to which he subscribes. The British Left was driven to near-psychosis by the triumphs of Margaret Thatcher, just as American liberals were hurled into a policy void by Ronald Reagan. More recently, the American Right has been subjected to the Chinese water torture of the Clinton presidency in the wake of the Lewinsky affair, as the mere idea of a new poll demonstrating the president's high approval rating can provoke a terrifying bout of anxiety.

Perhaps no politician in our time has been so maddening to his adversaries as New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani. The city's transformation during the six and a half years of his tenure has proved every bit as threatening to the *amour propre* of his enemies as Reagan and Thatcher were to theirs. In short order, he single-handedly untied the Gordian knots into which left-liberal policies had tangled the city, with a remorseless display of "energy in the executive" that would have exhausted even Alexander Hamilton, author of the phrase.

Rudolph Giuliani by Roman Genn

Two new books—Andrew Kirtzman's eminently fair-minded portrait of Giuliani's quest for and management of City Hall and a self-described "investigative biography" by Wayne Barrett that might be better termed an uncontrolled 498-page blast of fury—try to get to the bottom of the Giuliani phenomenon. Both reveal how the uncomfortable and unsuccessful candidate of the city's 1989 election turned into the victor of 1993. And both detail, in wildly different tones, the amazing things that happened once Giuliani was sworn in.

Giuliani's police department presided over a 60 percent reduction in the overall crime rate. Half a million people were dropped from the welfare rolls, owing mostly to the imposition of strict oversight on the program. (The number of people sleeping in the streets and in city shelters declined as well, indicating that a vast majority of those dropped actually had gainful employment and were cheating the city's overburdened taxpayers.) Giuliani used the fact of the city's multimillion-dollar budget deficits to shrink a ballooning government that at one point employed more than 350,000 people. He combined the city's three warring police forces—the NYPD, the Housing police, and the Transit police—into one, vastly more efficient department. He successfully revamped the city's child-services bureaucracy after the horrific murder of Eliza Izquierdo, whom social workers repeatedly neglected to save. He cut taxes (though not as deeply as necessary, and he is now retreating from important new cuts because of threatened future deficits). He drove the mob out of the garbage-hauling industry—reducing costs to business by 75 to 80 percent—and also ended Mafia control of the Fulton Fish Market, the largest distribution point for seafood in the United States. He also helped bring about the end of an open-admissions regime in the City University system that had resulted in on-time graduation rates down in the single digits. And though he had no statutory power to do it, he forced out two dysfunctional chancellors of the city's disastrous public-school fiefdom and compelled a frank public discussion of fundamental education reforms like charters and vouchers.

Giuliani did all of this while being taunted and baited in the media and in the city's institutional corridors of power for hard-heartedness, vindictiveness, cruelty, and the purported authoritarian tendencies that have led dozens of critics and colleagues to compare him to Adolf Hitler.

Wayne Barrett is less interested in Hitler analogies than in depicting Giuliani as a Mafioso, with mob corpuscles swimming around in his blood—despite the fact that Giuliani first became famous as a U.S. attorney for his

Mr. Podhoretz is a columnist for the *New York Post* and a contributing editor of *The Weekly Standard*.

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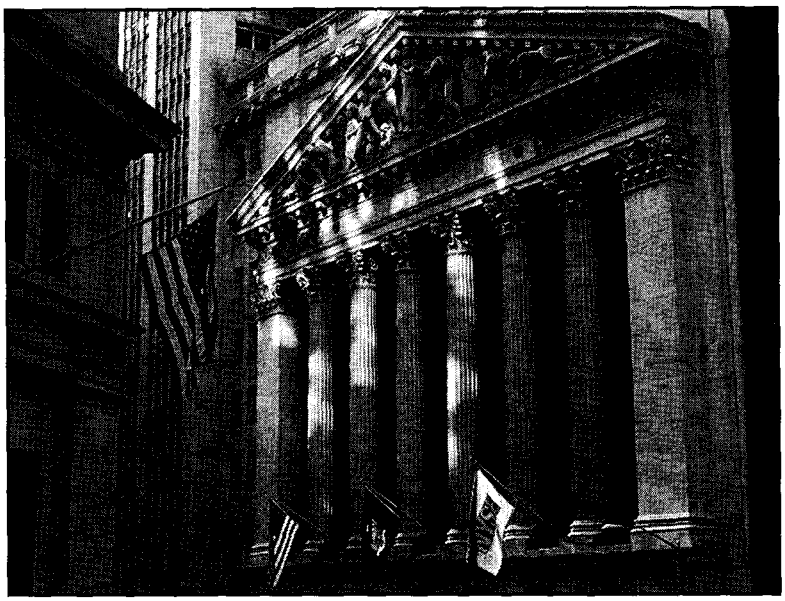
Making a Killing on Wall Street?



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Today in America, hundreds of companies are involved in the business of abortion. Some companies directly perform abortions in their facilities, which means that they literally have the blood of the innocent on their hands on a daily basis. Other companies produce abortifacients, effectively turning millions of medicine cabinets in America into abortion clinics.

Abortion is big business, and many investors can't turn down the opportunity for a hefty profit.

The culture of death is alive and well on Wall Street.

Tragically, whether owning these stocks directly, or owning them within mutual funds, many pro-life investors unknowingly own companies that kill the unborn.

Pro-life investors who have dedicated their lives to the protection of the unborn are actually profiting from companies on the wrong side of the battle. However, many are beginning to realize that companies involved in the abortion industry have no place in their investment portfolios. Unfortunately, for the past twenty-seven years, little help has been available to individuals who wished to invest in accordance with their pro-life beliefs . . . ***until now.***

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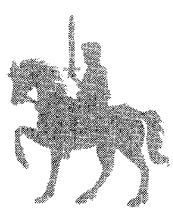

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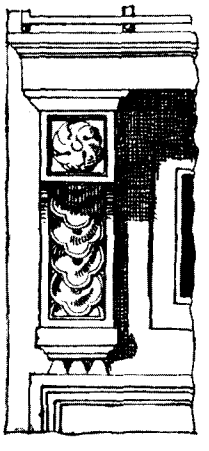
successful prosecutions of Mafia chieftains in the 1980s. A longtime staffer at the *Village Voice*, Barrett has written an exhaustive and exhausting book that reads like a sloppy McCarthyite brief for the prosecution.

Barrett is so consumed with hatred for his subject that he completely misunderstands the significance of his own remarkable discovery that Giuliani's father had served time in Sing Sing before Rudy's birth on a 1934 armed-robbery charge. After his release, Harold Giuliani worked for mobbed-up relatives. He was never again guilty of a crime but did threaten freeloaders with a baseball bat if they failed to pay their bar tabs. Barrett labors mightily to connect Harold Giuliani's criminal past with his son's conduct as mayor, and the facts of these two lives, father's and son's, do offer an unprecedented opportunity to understand this most mysterious of public figures. Giuliani's severity and excessive sense of rectitude—which led him, among other things, to vicious prosecutorial misconduct in his U.S.-attorney days, like the public handcuffing and humiliation of a Kidder Peabody stockbroker later acquitted of insider-trading charges—may actually have been an effort to extirpate the sins of a father he dearly loved. Giuliani, it turns out, is a man tormented by a secret shame. Did the father try to use his own example to set his son on a straight-and-narrow path, or did Rudy determine on his own to cleanse his family of its taint? We will never know—unless Rudy tells us.



But it would take the eye of a novelist to see such complexity. The admittedly dogged Barrett has not an ounce of the delicacy or sensitivity required of a biographer. His book is the work of a bloodhound-pointer mix afflicted with cataracts. He throws everything he can at Giuliani—every hand ever shaken that belonged to someone later accused of a conflict of interest, every person he ever met who did something wrong before or after. This is journalistic guilt-by-association of the worst sort—and it is therefore fortunate that *Rudy!* is a lumpy agony of a book. Only Barrett's fellow haters will be able to make their way through it.

In an unparalleled display of journalistic small-mindedness, Barrett assigns Giuliani almost no credit whatever for anything good that has happened in New York City. Shockingly, he even attempts to assign credit for the crime turnaround to Giuliani's predecessor, David Dinkins, because he signed into law a tax-and-spend bill providing the NYPD with 8,000 new cops. But Dinkins had resisted the law's policing aspects, which were the brainchild of City Council speaker Peter Vallone, and delayed their implementation for a year claiming budgetary restraints—an act of passive resistance that may have cost hundreds of lives.

■

Shockingly, Barrett attempts to assign credit for the crime turnaround to Giuliani's predecessor, David Dinkins.

■

Barrett has written a Marxist tome—Groucho Marx, that is, the man who said to the woman who saw him in the arms of another, "Who are you going to believe, me or your own eyes?" Barrett wishes New Yorkers and others to believe that the crime drop is a mirage, that the city isn't cleaner or safer or better-run, when three seconds on 42nd Street or Edgecombe Avenue in Harlem or Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn or Jamaica Avenue in Queens prove otherwise. Barrett could have written a tome 26 volumes in length, and still it would not convince anyone who does not desperately wish to believe the worst of Giuliani that the lie he is telling is the hidden truth.

Andrew Kirtzman, a talk-show host on the city's local cable-news channel, NY1, has all sorts of professional reasons to be hostile to Giuliani. The mayor has never appeared on Kirtzman's nightly program, believing it (unfairly) to be implacably biased against him. But Kirtzman is a fair man, and in *Rudy Giuliani: Emperor of the City*, he bends over backwards to understand a politician who alternately astounds and disappoints him. His short and snappy portrait captures the essence of Giuliani's singular success—the way in which the city no longer drips with the menace that characterized it in the 30 years before Giuliani's ascension to City Hall.

Kirtzman recounts most of Giuliani's accomplishments and controversies in breezy detail, calling his subject the most successful mayor in 50 years even as he laments what he takes to be the missed opportunities of the Giuliani mayoralty. Those criticisms boil down to this, in both Kirtzman's and Barrett's view: *Why can't he be nicer to black people?*

Giuliani believes that the 1,000–1,500 fewer deaths of African Americans in the course of his tenure (owing to the decrease in crime from Dinkins levels) is a mark of his service to that community—a service far more meaningful than the symbolic importance of electing the city's first black mayor in 1989 or the tiresome importunities of the city's enormous network of activists and politicians who claim to speak for all of its blacks. His lonely but unswerving efforts to improve the schools and public colleges and his equally lonely (and more successful) efforts to end the cycle of welfare dependency that made New York City a negative model of the welfare state have been of particular value to its black citizens.

But this is an argument Giuliani has not won, because victory in this realm would be the final rout of the liberal New York establishment that this one-time supporter of Robert Kennedy chose to face down with all the strength at his command. The source of that strength is, as Kirtzman acknowledges, also the source of his less attractive qualities—his obnoxiousness, his irrational refusal to share credit with underlings, his unwillingness to admit error until long after it would be useful and meaningful to do so.

Under ordinary circumstances, a man with Giuliani's particular flaws could never have been elected mayor. But the circumstances of 1993 were far from ordinary. The times called for an extraordinary combination of characteristics if the city was to be saved from itself, and Giuliani was the right man in the right place at the right time. **NR**

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More About Minister Sharansky's Letter

Is he (are we) justified in being seriously concerned?

You may have seen in this or some other publication an advertisement featuring an open letter by former Israeli Interior Minister Natan Sharansky to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak. That advertisement was signed by 30 Jewish leaders, from across the country and of all persuasions. In that letter, Mr. Sharansky expressed his concern about the ever-increasing concessions that Mr. Barak, almost single-handedly, is making to Mr. Arafat and his Palestinians. The area of greatest concern is the almost heedless giving away of large chunks of the Jewish homeland, in order to appease the insatiable appetite of the Arabs.

What are the facts?

The futility of appeasement. Even though Israel (including the "West Bank" and the Golan) is barely half the size of San Bernardino County in California and would sink without trace in Lake Michigan, Israel's leaders toss chunks of it away as though the country were the size of the United States, Canada, or Russia. They do that in the futile attempt to induce the Palestinians and the other Arabs (and non-Arab Moslems) to make peace with the beleaguered Jewish state. But there will be no peace, and yielding more and more territory to those who daily in their newspapers call for the elimination of Israel is reckless and stupid.

It is almost unbelievable that a generation of Jews (or at least a significant sector of Jewish "liberal intellectuals") would not have learned anything from our horrible recent history. We must look the hard facts squarely in the eye. And those hard facts are that the Arabs (and the non-Arab Moslems) are almost single-mindedly obsessed with the destruction of Israel. Their determination to accomplish that is fully comparable to that of the Hitlerite Nazis. Those who refuse to see that or to acknowledge it are fools or at least live in a haze of wishful thinking.

Territories that have been designated as indispensable strategic assets for the defense of Israel – the Golan Heights, the Judean-Samarian Mountains, the Jordan Valley – are carelessly offered as appeasement presents. In fact, Israel is goaded to make such concessions by its "friends", including (it is painful to acknowledge) the Clinton Administration, for which a "Mid-East Peace" would be a foreign policy triumph.

Is Israeli territory not sacred? The Arabs consider every inch of their territory as "sacred Arab soil". Mr. Sadat, Egypt's president at the time, was handed the vast Sinai Peninsula – with its oil fields developed by the Israelis, its sophisticated military installations, and its burgeoning cities – on a silver platter. He then went to the World Court to sue Israel for Taba – one disputed square mile that he could not bear to abandon to the hated Jews. The sainted King Hussein of Jordan insisted on a "border modification" involving a few acres of land before he would deign to sign a peace treaty with Israel. The late unlamented Hafez Assad of Syria was literally begged to accept a present of the entire Golan Heights, in return for granting "peace" to Israel. But he walked away from the deal because it did not include a strip of shoreline on the Sea of Galilee – again, "sacred Arab soil". It is only the Israeli Jews, to whom no part of their country appears to be sacred, who carelessly and indifferently toss away chunks of their very small patrimony. You may be sure that a good portion of Jerusalem, once thought of as the "eternal indivisible capital of Israel", will be the next peace offering.

> "Israel would be foolish to make any territorial concessions at all until it can be convinced that all Arab and Moslem countries have forsworn their enmity of Israel and their desire to wipe it off the map."

What Israel is expected to do – to reward those who have invaded it (for the purpose of destroying it) with territorial gifts – is unprecedented in the history of the world. Nobody has ever suggested that the French return Alsace-Lorraine to Germany, the Czechs the Sudetenland, or the Poles the vast swatches of Eastern Germany that they received after World War II. The Russians laugh at the suggestion that they should return to Japan the islands they snatched from them in the last weeks of World War II. It is only Israel that is expected to bring such "sacrifices for peace", a bizarre term that has been coined specifically for application to this proposed outrage.

Only fools and wishful thinkers will believe that making such "sacrifices" will bring peace even one step closer. On the contrary, the more Israel allows itself to be weakened by yielding strategic assets, the more likely are the Arabs to be encouraged to launch the war for which they are so feverishly preparing and to attempt to finish off the Jewish State (an intolerable thorn in their side) once and for all.

Peace can only come about by a fundamental mind change by the Arabs, a sincere desire to live in peace and hoped-for prosperity with Israel. But that is not in the cards. Arab publications feature the most outrageous stories and caricatures about Israel and about Jews. Schoolchildren in Arab countries, including those under the Palestinian Authority, are taught that the Jews are devils, must be destroyed, and that "all of Palestine" (and we know what that means) must be recovered. Israel would be foolish to make any territorial concessions at all until it can be convinced that all Arab and Moslem countries have forsworn their enmity of Israel and their desire to wipe it off the map. That may take a little while. It certainly cannot be hastened by giving away big chunks of the country.

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Zionist Crackup

CHANDLER BURR

The Jewish State: The Struggle for Israel's Soul, by Yoram Hazony (Basic, 433 pp., $28)

THE controversy that Yoram Hazony's *The Jewish State* has generated in this country is probably due both to the book's subject—the argument that there can and should be a modern democratic state defined by an ancient religious and ethnic identity—and to the fact that it rather breathtakingly encompasses at once the most intractable armed conflict in the world and the thorniest intellectual question of the early 21st century: What role should race, ethnicity, and religion play in the value of the human being? It's a big book on a big subject, and it raises a big question—one that is being devoutly ignored by most American Jews because answering it would mean to them, in an almost literal sense, the end of the world.

The thesis presented by Hazony, an American-born Orthodox Israeli and a political conservative, echoes that of Zionism's father, Theodor Herzl. Herzl believed that "a strong Jewish political and military power . . . alone could guarantee the Jews as a people security and freedom." Given history's bitter lessons, Hazony argues, with Herzl, that "only in an independent Jewish state can Jews participate fully in every aspect of the society and the state" and thereby achieve "inner wholeness." The question he asks in this book is whether the Israeli Left could achieve what Israel's Arab enemies could not—the destruction of the Jewish state—by transforming Israel into "precisely that which the early dreamers of Zionism fought to escape: a state devoid of any Jewish purpose and meaning, one that can neither inspire the Jews nor save them in distress." His answer is a resounding yes—if something is not done about it quickly.

Hazony's description of what he calls post-Zionism (by which he really means anti-Zionism) is suitably eye-popping. He quotes staffers from the liberal daily *Ha'aretz* likening Israel's citizenship laws to the Nuremberg laws and calling the Law of Return—which allows any Jew who wishes to emigrate to Israel to become a citizen—"overt discrimination." Israeli public figures demand the dejudaization of the Israeli flag and national anthem, seek actively to downgrade Jewish content in the public schools, and attack the concept of Jewish sovereignty. Former education minister Shulamit Aloni has called the notion of a Jewish state "antidemocratic, if not racist" and has done her part to reverse the State Education Law (passed by the Labor Zionists in 1953), which sought to inculcate "the values of Jewish culture" and "loyalty to the Jewish people." ("What's important," Aloni explained, "is that they [become] better human beings, not better Jews.") Hazony notes that "not once" in the introduction to the Ministry of Education's new archaeology curriculum is there "a single reference to Jews, Judaism, the Jewish people, or Jewish history, or to the fact that students are going to dig in the Jewish state. Instead there is a profusion of distilled universalism: 'the spirit of man,' 'the culture of mankind,' 'human culture and its contribution to mankind.'"

Universalism, for Hazony, is a demoralizing, disorienting blow to the Jewish aspect of a decreasingly Jewish state.

So much for education. Hazony's attack on Israeli high culture focuses mainly on the novelists David Grossman, Amos Oz, and A. B. Yehoshua, who write movingly about the suffering of Arabs at Israeli hands. The Israeli courts are no less problematic: Supreme Court chief justice Aharon Barak has essentially declared that democracy is incompatible with the legal elevation of one group above others. Hazony ends his survey with the military, where he finds post-Zionist ideas robbing the Israeli Defense Force of its purpose. The mission of the IDF, he writes, "has never been the safeguarding of 'state, citizens, and democracy.' Its purpose was to . . . serve as the guardian of the Jewish people." Universalism, for Hazony, is a demoralizing, disorienting blow to the Jewish aspect of a decreasingly Jewish state.

How, then, to keep Israel Jewish? Hazony's answer is simple: ideas. Quoting Herzl's dictum that "only an idea" can move a people, Hazony argues that the old Zionists were undone by their "abandonment of the deep end of the pool of cultural and political idea-work." This is where Hazony's book really gets interesting. Some reviewers—like Walter Reich, director of the Holocaust Memorial Museum—have alleged that in this book devoted to the notion that ideas will redeem the state of Israel, Hazony provides no ideas. This statement is technically wrong. Hazony does have an idea, though one that is frankly unworkable: 20th-century Jews should return to 19th-century ethnonationalism.

Hazony is exquisitely specific on this point. He presents two alternatives. Jean-Jacques Rousseau proposed a "social-contract state" in which all individuals are equal, regardless of natural or historical differences. Herzl, who had witnessed the tragedy of the Dreyfuss affair and concluded that Jews would always be vulnerable since gentiles would always be anti-Semitic, subscribed to the idea of the nation-state—the idea of ethnicity determining a state for and of one group of people. "We are a people—*one* people," Herzl wrote emphatically.

But here is the big and essentially unaddressed question Hazony's book raises: What does a Jewish state—and by extension, Jewishness itself—really mean in today's world? This has proved a tricky question for American Jews, which is a polite way of saying that the debate over *The Jewish State* has

Mr. Burr, a regular contributor to *The Atlantic Monthly*, is author of *A Separate Creation: The Search for the Biological Origins of Sexual Orientation*.

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been screamingly incoherent. Take columnist Charles Krauthammer. Here is an American conservative who derides the PC victim mentality, rejects the destructive belief of many blacks that no whites can be trusted because whites will always be racist, and exhorts feminists, gay-rights advocates, et al. to embrace color-blind universalism. Yet in his strong public support for Hazony, Krauthammer prescribes exactly the same kind of identity politics for Jews that he attacks in other contexts.

This kind of inconsistency is not limited to conservatives. The Jewish-American Left is caught in the same bind—indeed the hypocrisy on that side is even more striking. In *Slate*, columnist Judith Shulevitz simultaneously condemned Bob Jones University for its anti-intermarriage philosophy and—in the same article—defended the anti-intermarriage philosophy of Judaism.

Hazony likewise contradicts himself. He decries the Catholic Church's infamous 1871 rejection of secularism, liberalism, modern civilization, and religious tolerance, saying that it demonstrates the need for a Jewish Israel; yet he also demands that Israel reject secularism, liberalism, and religious tolerance because Israel is for Jews. Opposing arguments are used to buttress an identical conclusion: Religious intolerance is good when Jews do it to Muslims but bad when Catholics do it to Jews.

Elsewhere in the world, Europe's nation-states are uniting, transcending ancient ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences. Salman Rushdie attacks the rise of violent Hindu nationalism in India as "the triumph of sectarianism over secularism, of hatred over fellowship, of ugliness over love." Everyone condemns the nationalist ethnic slaughter in ex-Yugoslavia. Yet Hazony promotes theologically based ethnocentric nationalism as a conservative ideal.

The Jewish State is, particularly in its detailed presentation of the state of the state of Israel, an excellent book. Or rather, two excellent books: The evidence it presents could sustain either side of the argument. Hazony quotes Shimon Peres—"We do not need to reinforce sovereignty, but rather to strengthen the position of humankind"—and Amos Oz—"I would be more than happy to live in a world composed of dozens of civilizations . . . without the tools of statehood. . . . Nationalism itself is, in my eyes, the curse of mankind." To a true-believing Zionist, these statements are self-evidently horrifying. To an equally committed post-Zionist, they are wonderful. The choice is one that puts both Jewish Israelis and Jewish Americans in a tough position. For Israelis—let us be clear—such universalism means the death of the Jewish state and of a nation in which Jews can say, with Herzl and Hazony, "We are a people—*one* people." But it will hardly be easier for American Jews who yearn to preserve their Jewishness, yet who live (and firmly believe) in a country whose coins are imprinted "E pluribus unum." **NR**

The Statist Temptation

FRED SIEGEL

It Didn't Happen Here: Why Socialism Failed in the United States, by Seymour Martin Lipset and Gary Marks (Norton, 379 pp., $26.95)

ALMOST twenty years ago, just as François Mitterrand's Socialists were about to come to power with the promise of "Bread and Roses," I was sitting in a Paris auditorium listening to a debate on the question, "Why is there no socialism in America?" Today the better question might be, "Why is there no socialism in Europe?" but at the time the question that had haunted generations of American and European intellectuals was still on the table. The speaker was Seymour Martin Lipset, a tall, stocky, enormously learned middle-aged man whose very presence seemed to annoy the audience of young left-wing academics. But when Lipset explained that socialism in America had failed in large part because the distinctly American and liberal principles on which the country was founded were shared by Whigs and Democrats as well, the audience became positively apoplectic. One of the New Leftists could barely contain himself and whispered loudly enough for everyone to hear, "Enough of this dinosaur." Lipset was unruffled, but I was dismayed. He had laid out a strong case, and I wanted to hear a response that met the argument on its own terms. It turns out that there is no effective reply—and today it's the New Left that's extinct.

Now Lipset and his coauthor, Gary Marks, have elaborated on Lipset's persuasive argument with *It Didn't Happen Here: Why Socialism Failed in the United States*. The question is worth going over once again precisely because arguments once made for socialism will reappear in new forms in the coming years.

The intensity of the clashes between American workers and capitalists during the industrial strikes of the late 19th century made it appear that socialism was on the horizon. Indeed, the German sociologist Werner Sombart thought it axiomatic that the United States, as the most advanced industrial country, should be leading the way to socialism. The problem, as the European socialist Max Beer explained, was

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The problem, as one socialist put it, was that the U.S. was a 'living contradiction of Marxian theory.'

■

that the United States was a "living contradiction . . . of Marxian theory," a contradiction that generated enormous anxiety among socialists. Trotsky, who briefly lived in the Bronx with his family in 1917, provided an answer of sorts when he explained that their apartment "in a workers district" was "equipped with all sorts of conveniences that we Europeans were quite unused to: electric lights, gas cooking range, bath, telephone, automatic service elevator and even a chute for the garbage. These things completely won [his children] over to New York."

Mr. Siegel is author of *The Future Once Happened Here: New York, D.C., L.A., and the Fate of America's Big Cities*, just published in paperback by Encounter Books.

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Was socialism defeated by affluence? Lipset and Marks aren't sure, although it is clearly one piece of the puzzle. In a dense and detailed but clearly developed series of chapters, they reason their way through all the primary explanations for why the U.S., alone among the industrialized countries, didn't develop a strong and enduring socialist movement. Here are some of the key explanations they dismiss:

The absence of a feudal past. Americans were, in a sense, born free. The absence of feudalism and the ready availability of land meant that almost everyone held the property needed to be a voting citizen. By contrast, so the argument goes, European socialist parties fastened onto the struggle to secure the voting franchise. But, as Lipset and Marks explain, this is not a sufficient answer, since Australia also enjoyed mass suffrage from the start and nevertheless developed a strong socialist party.

Federalism. Some, such as political scientist Theodore Lowi, argue that American federalism is the explanation. Federalism fragments authority and makes the individual units vie against one another, a competitive arrangement uniquely hospitable to capitalism. But Canada is also federalist, and the socialist New Democratic party that currently governs Saskatchewan has long been established as the country's third major party.

Repression. Some point to the repression of the Socialist party for its antiwar stance in World War I. But countries such as Germany, Spain, and Chile, which did far more for much longer to suppress their socialist parties, all have strong left-wing parties today.

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The real threat to American freedom, now as in the past, has been not socialism but statism.

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Lipset and Marks argue that what makes the U.S. exceptional is not the absence of class but the fact that class conflict was not expressed in politics in the form of a workingman's party. This was partly due to the difficulty third parties have always had in establishing themselves in our first-past-the-post political culture. (Contrast this with countries like Italy and France, where systems of proportional representation have given socialist—and Communist—parties a foothold.) More fundamentally, the authors argue that the American social system, which expressed the fundamental values of individualism and antistatism, was inimical to socialism. They quote, as Lipset did in Paris, from Seth Luther, a leader of the Massachusetts shoeworkers, who in 1832 grounded his argument for social equality not on Jacobin radicalism but on the fact that, according to the Declaration of Independence, "all men are created equal."

In hindsight, given our founding principles and the nature of our political system, it seems extremely unlikely that socialism ever would have developed in this country. The real threat to American freedom, now as in the past, has been not socialism but statism, and the attempts by various factions to monopolize state power. Lipset and Marks warn that the collapse of socialism doesn't mean that people won't again seek salvation through statism should the economy go sour, but the economy doesn't have to go sour for statism to have tremendous appeal. The statism of the Left was born in scarcity; today it is not poverty but prosperity that opens

■ SHELF LIFE ■

IN today's culture, discussions of ethics usually focus on politicized hot-button issues (notably, abortion) on which the relevant talking points have been memorized and recited into a virtual kabuki level of ritualization. But what about the ordinary, day-to-day struggles of the moral life? In an effort to bring the best thought and writing of the Western—and other—traditions to bear on these questions, a self-described "group of friends" has launched a series of books called The Ethics of Everyday Life, published by the University of Notre Dame Press.

The "friends" are an intellectually distinguished crew including (among others) Richard John Neuhaus, Gilbert Meilaender, and Amy and Leon Kass. In their preface to the series, they write that "today's proliferation of [specialized, professional] codes of ethics, while an expression of moral concern, is at the same time an expression of moral poverty. We write new rules and regulations because we lack shared customs and understandings." In the absence of such shared understandings—which define a community—we need to make an extra effort to understand how to live good lives; it is to this project that the Notre Dame series of anthologies offers a valuable contribution.

The Kasses, in *Wing to Wing, Oar to Oar: Readings on Courting and Marrying* (636 pp., $15), try to answer the question of an undergraduate who was ridiculed at the University of Chicago for saying that the most important decision he would ever have to make would be, Who should be the mother of his children? Excerpts—some very long—from sources as diverse as Shakespeare, Jane Austen, and midrashic tales are brought to bear on the question of married love, what it is and how and why it should be pursued.

Other highlights of the series are Neuhaus's *The Eternal Pity: Reflections on Dying* (181 pp., $25), which offers readings on death from the major religious and philosophical traditions, and Meilaender's *Working: Its Meaning and Its Limits* (271 pp., $15), which tackles the most literally quotidian of human activities and shows its connection to the wellsprings of the dignity of the human race.

These books will be useful as assigned reading for college students otherwise mired in today's politicized and overspecialized academic works, but they deserve a broader readership owing to the sheer quality of the writing: The Great Books of both East and West are great not just because of their message, but because of the joy they give readers; the excerpts from contemporary writers are also well chosen. Overall, the series is a welcome contribution to the academy, and to the project of moral philosophy. —MICHAEL POTEMRA

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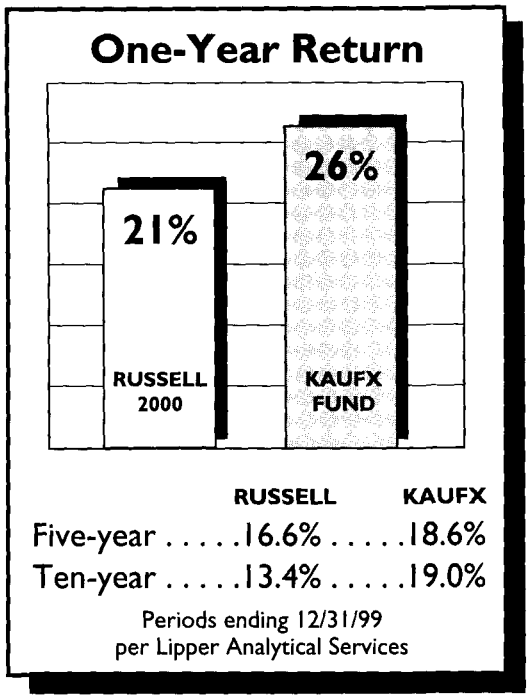
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the back door to bigger, more centralized government.

Take urban sprawl, for example. The very success of American life has produced unprecedented sprawl and congestion. In Atlanta, the nation's fastest-growing metropolitan area, traffic tie-ups and pollution have led normally antistatist Georgians to turn over extraordinary powers to the governor, who will now have the right to say where and when things can be built. In an increasingly upper-middle-class society, the growing popularity of state-managed growth to maintain quality of life, particularly at the local level, suggests that Americans are all too ready to reach for a statist solution. Perhaps, then, it is time to stop asking this old question about socialism and start asking about the history of statism in America, and the unexamined risks to freedom posed by our extraordinary affluence. **NR**

Blue Rhapsody

LUCIANNE GOLDBERG

American Rhapsody, by Joe Eszterhas (Knopf, 432 pp., $25.95)

FOR those of you who missed the Starr Report, Joe Eszterhas, a large, wolfish, whisky-voiced, and chain-smoking Hollywood screenwriter of particularly bad movies, has written his own dirtier version. This is the author's first foray into big-time publishing, i.e., big buzz, big serialization in the unread *Talk* magazine, big media tour, and big lunches with columnists. On some shows he's been able to explain himself, on others not (probably the ones right after lunch). What he seems to want to say is that Clinton was supposed to be the rock-'n'-roll president and, because he lied to us, turned out to be nothing more than a tuba-playing band wuss in Big Boy jeans.

That this book exists at all shows that his publishers took the success of Eszterhas's Hollywood pitch meetings seriously, and thought they could publish a book from an outline scribbled on a cocktail napkin at Elaine's.

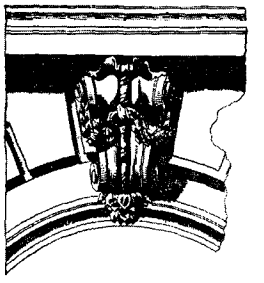
■

One assumes Mr. Eszterhas no longer uses drugs, and more's the pity.

■

Still, one can think of no more appropriate chronicler of the squalor of the Clinton White House than a writer made famous by the money shot of Sharon Stone crossing her legs in *Basic Instinct*—a shot for which, he discreetly tells us, the actress spent "a morning in hair and makeup."

American Rhapsody was written during Eszterhas's year-long nap time from his labors in the movie industry, coinciding with the Clinton/Lewinsky scandal. Safely married for the second time to his best friend's former wife and away from the hurly-burly of the Hollywood chaise longue, Eszterhas became obsessed. Seeing the scandal as some sort of telling metaphor for his generation's years of sex, drugs, rock-'n'-roll, and draft dodging, he holed up in Hawaii, presumably with a VCR, the Internet, and a Lexis-Nexis account.



The result is a gigantic clip-and-paste job, interspersed with yawn-producing tales of Hollywood low life. Published as nonfiction by the once-proud house of Alfred A. Knopf, *American Rhapsody* is a tedious recycling of news articles, TV talk-show transcripts, the Linda/Monica tapes, and pure X-rated imaginings. One assumes Mr. Eszterhas no longer uses drugs, and more's the pity. A few screaming reds and black beauties could have improved this work. Reading this thing is like waking to find yourself cast in *Boogie Nights* at gunpoint, 50 pounds overweight, with no controlled substances to see you through, and only two bottles of YooHoo in the fridge.

That there are so many errors of fact in *American Rhapsody* is not really the author's fault. Doing no original reporting, he has merely regurgitated the disinformation that flowed into the media bloodstream during those fetid times. Of the incidents this reviewer is personally aware of (I lived them), I counted seven factual mistakes on one page before I gave up and plowed on . . . through the Monica monologues, the Hillary mea culpas, Bubba's whine of misunderstanding, the author's abject worship of pornographer Larry Flynt and adoration of Vernon "Ovah and Ovah and Ovah" Jordan, until finally we get the most creative work—Willard, the Talking Presidential Penis, and what a little sweetheart he is. According to Eszterhas, the little fellow has been jerking the president around since infancy and is totally responsible for everything Clinton has done to himself and to us. In the end, by making Clinton and his member the last great symbol of his aging, weary, disillusioned generation, Eszterhas has reduced it all to (to hear the girls talk) approximately four inches of flesh.

Eszterhas says he wrote this book not because there is anything wrong with what Clinton did with his personal life but because he lied about it. This is not a believable statement—not when the real truth can be found as early as page 36: ". . . and now, suddenly, to have all this hedonistic '60s stuff, the cigar, the blow jobs, the whacking, plopped down on the kitchen table at dinner—by the man we voted for, by the man who shared our vision of a better America—we didn't want any part of it. . . . many of us, now Little League coaches and soccer moms, were ashamed." If Eszterhas and all the other besotted Clinton defenders had admitted as much at the beginning of the whole Monica slimefest, we all could have saved so much time. That's all those who labored so long to let the truth be heard wanted to hear.

One hopes that after all this typing, Eszterhas has come to grips with his own inner Willard and can move on. **NR**

Mrs. Goldberg is a nationally syndicated talk-show host on Talk Radio Network and publishes an Internet news forum, *Lucianne.com*. She lives in New York, where it is legal to tape phone calls.

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OPEN FORUM

How We Judge a Fallen Hero

By Ethan Nadelmann

DARRYL STRAWBERRY seems to have a hard time just saying no to cocaine.

For the third time in 10 years, Strawberry has entered a treatment center to deal with his addiction to the drug, and he has been suspended from baseball for a year for failing his drug test.

My first thought on hearing this news was: What's the matter with him? Can't he just say no, if only for the few more years that his knees hold out? He sure must like cocaine a lot.

My second thought was: Gee, Strawberry sure is lucky he's rich and famous, and that all sorts of people like George Steinbrenner care about him, because if he were poor and not famous, odds are that he'd be sitting behind bars right now, probably for violating probation or parole with a dirty urine sample. This country is full of people whose only offense is an inability to say no to cocaine. Some go to fancy rehabs, some sort it out at home, and the unlucky ones get to think it over in jail or prison.

My third thought was: Strawberry's addicted. He's got a disease, or a disability. This is not a case of moral weakness but of metabolic dysfunction. We don't punish folks for their diseases, or disabilities. If anything, we try to make accommodations for their disabilities so long as they don't pose direct threats to others. If we really believe that drug addiction is a disease, then there is no ethical or medical justification for depriving him of his livelihood for manifesting a symptom of the disease. Moreover, why in this case do we always blame the patient? Maybe the fault lies with the treatment provider.

My fourth thought was: Damn hypocrites! Strawberry can't seem to say no to cocaine, but who isn't addicted to one thing or another? Think about cigarettes. How many people have quit, and quit again, and again, and again? Some really do quit, but they still cheat every once in a while. Can't relate to cigarettes? Think about coffee. Imagine abstaining from that wonderful drug day after day after day, even on those mornings when nothing in the world would seem more pleasurable than a delicious hot cup of coffee. Can't relate to that one? Then think about

dieting, and about saying no to bread day after day after day. Who doesn't cheat? Who isn't addicted to something? Sure, cocaine is different. But what's most different about cocaine is not the nature of the experience, or the behavior associated with it, but the fact that it is illegal and the others aren't.

My fifth thought was: What exactly is the point of the punishment? Almost everything we've learned about drug use and addiction is that a good job and a supportive environment are crucial in enabling people to say no to drugs, or at least to keep their drug use under control. Strawberry's job as a major league ballplayer, responsible to his fans, teammates and employer, provided powerful incentives for him to keep his cocaine use under control. He may have slipped up in the off season, but no one doubts this man's courage and fortitude. So what is the point of suspending him from baseball? Is the punishment supposed to be a form of treatment? Or the treatment a form of punishment? Or can we no longer tell the difference?

My sixth thought was: Why don't they leave the guy alone? No one's suggested that Darryl's cocaine use gave him an unfair advantage over his competitors. And no one's claimed his drug use posed a threat to others on the ballfield. Indeed, no one's even charged he was impaired at the workplace. Seems to me Darryl's cocaine use was none of anyone else's business --apart from the laws and policies and contracts that make this private behavior supposedly everyone's business.

My seventh thought was: Perhaps professional baseball, and all professional sports, would be better off without any drug testing --except perhaps for performance enhancing substances. What's the point? Few employees work in more public workplaces. If they are impaired, people will notice, and managers will deal with it, quickly. If they're not impaired, and don't pose a threat to others, who cares if they're using one drug or another.

"But they're role models for young people," some say. If that's true, then why does the system insist on broadcasting their vices and frailties? It's hard enough living the life of a hero, constantly in the public eye, without having your urine tested and your results announced to the world. If we're running short on heros these days, maybe it's because we no longer respect their privacy, and their humanity, enough to let them be heros.

I'll tell you when Darryl Strawberry became my hero. I'm a Yankee fan, not a Mets fan, so it wasn't until quite recently: Oct. 17, 1999, to be exact, Game 4 of the American League Championship Series, at Boston's Fenway Park. According to The New York Times' Buster Olney: "When Strawberry came to bat for the first time, the Fenway Park fans offered a new and different chorus for the slugger with the history of drugs and alcohol --Just Say No.' Boston's Bret Saberhagen threw a high fastball and Strawberry rattled a high drive two-thirds of the way up the right field foul pole for a home run. It was the last time the hearty singers serenaded Strawberry on this evening."

It reminded me of another hero of mine who wasn't good at just saying no, Babe Ruth. He, too, broke the prohibition laws of the day with alacrity --but no one ever thought to test his urine. Good thing for him. Good thing for us.

Ethan A. Nadelmann is director of the Lindesmith Center (www.lindesmith.org), a drug policy institute with offices in New York and San Francisco.

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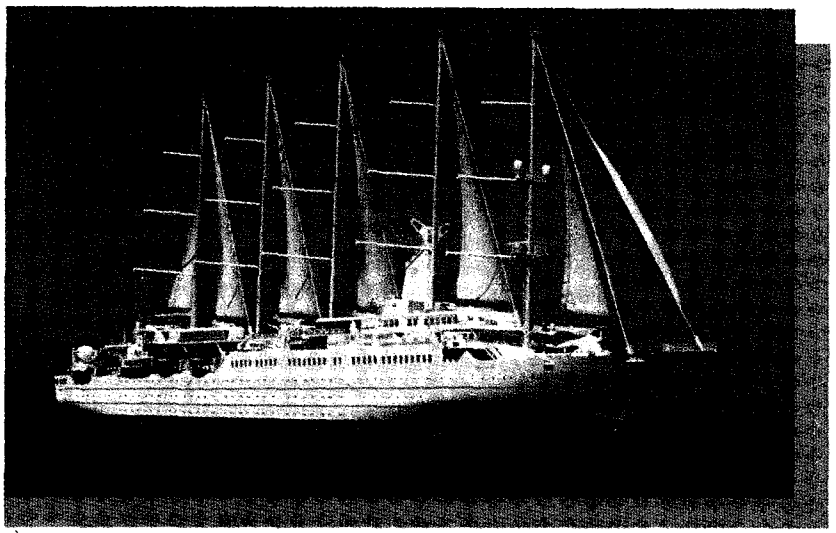

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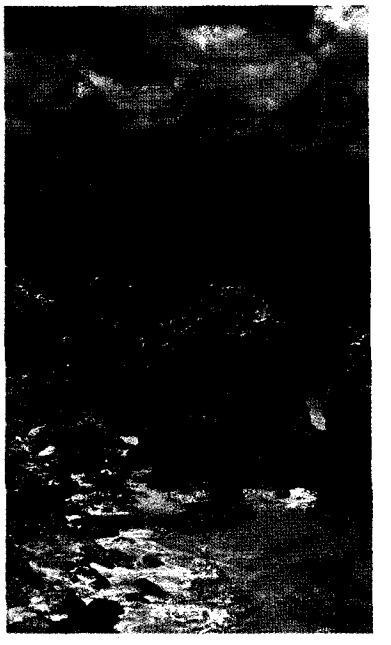

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Dec. 12 (Tue.)	Nevis, 8AM–6PM	Late-night smoker (post-dinner)
Dec. 13 (Wed.)	St Martin, 8AM–1AM	Morning Seminar
Dec. 14 (Thur.)	St Barthélemy, 8AM–5PM	Morning Seminar
Dec. 15 (Fri.)	Iles des Saintes, 8AM–5PM	Afternoon Seminar, Late-night smoker (post-dinner)
Dec. 16 (Sat.)	Pigeon Island, 7AM–4PM	Afternoon Seminar, Cocktail Reception (pre-dinner)
Dec. 17 (Sun.)	Bridgetown, 6AM arrival	

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Happy Thoughts

DANIEL P. MOLONEY

The Consolations of Philosophy, by Alain de Botton (Pantheon, 249 pp., $22.95)

A LIBERAL education can be a lot like a driver's license—a necessary credential for getting around in society given to more people than make proper use of it. Its goal, at least ostensibly, is not to expose the student to old books that somewhere acquired the reputation of Great, but to make him an intelligent participant in man's quest for how to live.

The 1997 bestseller *How Proust Can Change Your Life* revealed the then-28-year-old British writer Alain de Botton to have understood the purpose of his liberal education. Throughout *Proust* and de Botton's three earlier books runs the theme that high culture is high precisely because it reveals beauty in the low. Proust explored this theme by inventing a genre, the intellectual biography as self-help book. Much as Andy Warhol took an ordinary soup can and revealed its aesthetic qualities, Proust could take an everyday situation and tease out its moral, existential, and dramatic elements, finding in all of life its inherently interesting humanness. Presumably this would have been clear to anyone who read the seven volumes of Proust's novel *In Search of Lost Time*, but de Botton's genius was to take Proust's ideas and attitudes and present them with just enough erudition, humor, and irony at once to attract, challenge, and amuse the legions who may have received a liberal education but don't know what to do with it.

The Consolations of Philosophy leaves behind the realm of literature but promises more of the same. De Botton takes six quotidian struggles—with unpopularity, lack of wealth, frustration, inadequacy, a broken heart, and adversity—and tries to show from ancient and modern philosophers how they can be overcome. Again, the emphasis is on how the thoughts of each philosopher are therapeutic for certain ills of the modern or the human condition. Do most people ridicule our ideas and make us doubt ourselves? De Botton encourages us to learn from Socrates, who was more interested in truth than in the opinion of others. Are we finding some endeavor exceedingly difficult? Read Nietzsche, he advises, and learn that the joyous affirmation of life first requires pain and suffering. Not enough money to finance the lifestyle you covet? Follow Epicurus, and realize that possessions and worldly attachments only lead to anxiety and unhappiness; that pleasure and happiness consist in the company of friends, freedom from the expectations of others, and the exercise of our intellect—all of which are available to those with little money and none of which increases with great riches.

■

Do people ridicule our ideas and make us doubt ourselves? De Botton encourages us to learn from Socrates.

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Each chapter follows the format of the Proust book: De Botton introduces theme and thinker simultaneously and relates one to the other throughout, with a biographical sketch getting most of the weight at the beginning and the consolations of the philosopher's thought controlling the middle and end. De Botton relates each theme to ordinary life with the help of vignettes, either made out of whole cloth or taken from history or the author's own experience.

Unfortunately, this literary structure, which was just right for tackling the difficult Proust in a short book, doesn't work here. The chapters are too short, the problems too simple, the thinkers too complex for de Botton to pull off the self-help conceit. The pictures and illustrations sprinkled cleverly throughout *Proust* come too fast here, seeming cutesy and contrived. De Botton was able to extract from Proust something of the Romantic drive to self-expression and present it with a dollop of irony to

Mr. Moloney is associate editor of *First Things*.

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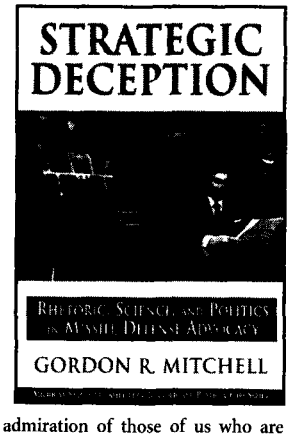

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—John Ziman, author of *Prometheus Bound*

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remind us that self-expression also requires humility. The irony does not work as well with the philosophers (except in the chapter on Montaigne, where it is too congenial, as if author and subject like all the same jokes). Irony undercuts Schopenhauer, neutralizes Seneca, and makes Epicurus seem naïve. Socrates and Nietzsche, perhaps irony's best practitioners, took themselves very seriously, and de Botton's deprecating humor makes it harder to appreciate them. Proust could be presented as a moral authority because de Botton's irony was affectionate—nobody should really take Proust the man as a guide to life, except in the detached way that de Botton does. Here it seems forced, as if the publisher had told him to write six shorter *Prousts* and lay it on thick.

These weaknesses would not be so frustrating were it not for the author's ambitions. Unlike other popular presentations of important thinkers—the *X in 90 Minutes* series or *Y for Dummies*—*The Consolations of Philosophy* was written not simply to introduce difficult thinkers to a broader audience, but to persuade us to change how we live. The author still subscribes to the Romantic notion that truth and beauty ought to motivate one's life, which is a reprise of the classical belief that seeking wisdom is man's highest pursuit. De Botton wants our ideas to matter, and rightly so.

And therein lies the problem. The true flaw of the book is the characteristic flaw of liberal education, namely its eclecticism. These thinkers disagreed with each other on almost every matter of substance, a fact the author does not hide. Do we follow reason with Socrates or eschew it with Montaigne? Do we become ascetics like Schopenhauer, Seneca, and Epicurus, or affirm life as Nietzsche encouraged? De Botton's book juxtaposes six mutually incompatible theories of life without comment as to how to sort them out. For someone taking ideas seriously, the book would provide little consolation.

This weakness of liberal education was apparent to its inventor, who distanced himself from it at the end of his life in the book to which de Botton's title alludes. Boethius (c. A.D. 480–524) had been a distinguished civil servant for King Theodoric, the Gothic emperor of Rome, until being condemned, on trumped-up charges of treason, to death by bludgeoning. In the short time between his sentencing and death, Boethius penned *De consolatione philosophiae*, one of the great works of prison literature and the greatest self-help book ever conceived. In five chapters of exquisite Latin, Boethius tells of his initial despair at being imprisoned, and of a vision in which Lady Philosophy appears to him and nurses his soul back to health through a combination of poetry and logic. She first sings to Boethius to calm his swollen passions, and then, as the beauty of her song lifts his spirits, leads him through a series of increasingly abstract and difficult arguments. She begins by questioning the relevance of fame and fortune to man's happiness (much as Socrates and Epicurus did), but then moves on to prove that God exists, that He can know the future without infringing on human freedom, and that the fortunes of the wicked (which landed Boethius in prison) do not conflict at all with God's justice and providence.

Boethius had been one of the most learned men of his age, one of the last Romans who could read Plato and Aristotle in Greek. When Western Europe forgot Greek, his writings became the basis of a liberal-arts curriculum that was widely in use in some form until the early 20th century. Yet when he was faced with death, his learning did him little good. Only when Philosophy showed him how to put together all that he had learned did he recover hope, his love of life, and his faith in God.

Philosophy showed Boethius that it is not enough to be versed in literature and music and other worldly affairs, because men are destined to transcend them. Socrates, Epicurus, Seneca, Montaigne, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche would agree. Each held that true philosophy makes men extraordinary, and each led his life in pursuit of what is noble in man. De Botton's aspirations are not so lofty. His reflections on ordinary life are charming in their place, but they are too banal for thinkers of this quality. His license needn't be revoked, but perhaps he needs a visit from Lady Philosophy to nurse his spiritual ambitions back to health. **NR**

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■ ESSAY ■

Love on the Arno

JAY NORDLINGER

I'VE been thinking about Florence, and I've been thinking about patriotism. Let me tell you why.

I've just returned from a visit to Florence (Italy, not South Carolina), where I was once a student; and, while there, I read Norman Podhoretz's beautiful and muscular new memoir about his "love affair with America." The memoir—I should blush to say—reminded me a lot of myself; of my own experiences, my own growth.

Norman P. sailed off to Cambridge University in 1950. He was always a patriotic kid, but he came back more patriotic—more America-appreciating—than ever. A dose of European anti-Americanism will do that to you. Some of those he encountered were even "more horrified by the prospect of being drowned by Coca-Cola and poisoned by hamburgers" than they were by Washington's foreign and defense policies.

My own school was not exactly Cambridge: It was the humble (but lovable) Istituto Michelangelo, an Italian-language school for foreigners. The year was 1984, a dark year for Orwell but a bright and pivotal one for me. I set off from Detroit on Icelandair, then the cheapest way to get to Europe. You stopped briefly in Reykjavik (where you were supposed to buy one of those grayish sweaters), then proceeded to either Luxembourg or Frankfurt. I chose Luxembourg.

On the train down to Florence, I had one of those encounters—small-seeming—that stay with you forever. I sat across from a young American woman who was a fellow student. (I believe she was from Berkeley, but that would be almost too perfect.) She had a broad face, sandy hair, and a splash of freckles. And she was deeply ashamed of her country. Reagan was president, you see, and he had planted missiles in Western Europe, and everything was grim. She confided to me that she could hardly bear to be associated with

■

It was one of those encounters—small-seeming—that stay with you forever.

■

America. Then she uttered the (to me) immortal words, "I'm hoping I can pass for German."

Please pause a second to consider that statement. Here we were in Europe—in France, actually, traveling through—only 39 years after V-E Day; only 39 years (less than two generations) after

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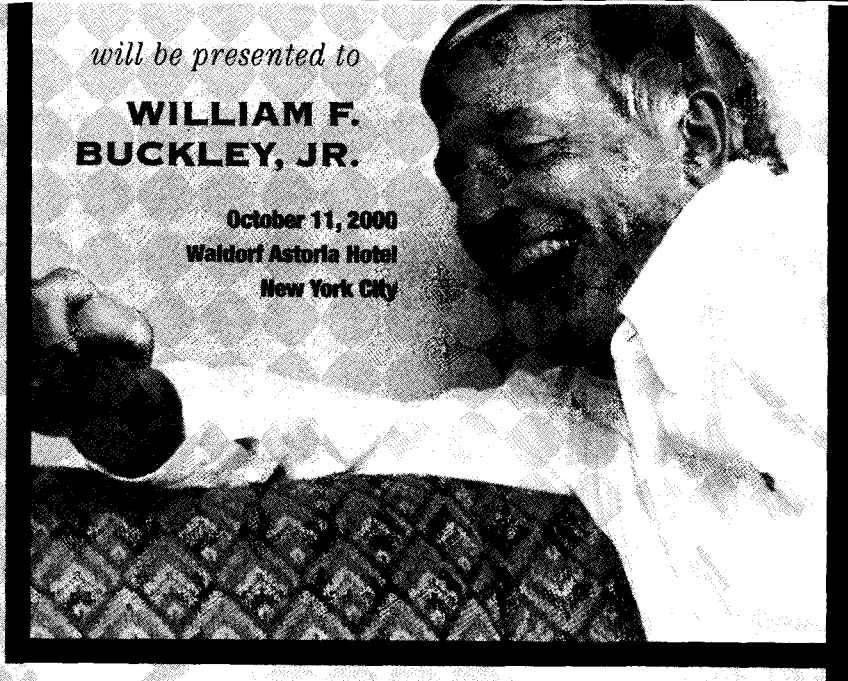

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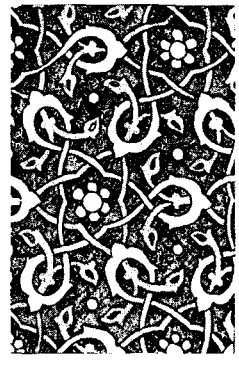
the ovens at Buchenwald and Bergen-Belsen had stopped belching. And this creepy, but, sadly, typical, girl—from *the United States*—was saying, "I'm hoping I can pass for German."

I was not yet fully formed, politically. I was certainly no flag-waver. But I wasn't like that, not like her. That I knew.

And so this process continued once I was ensconced at the Istituto Michelangelo. It wasn't so much the anti-Americanism of the Europeans that had an effect on me; that was par for the course. It was the self-hating Americanism of many of my compatriots around me. It is hard to recount now—in this happily different age—how they despised their country; how they hung their heads in shame about it. They bitterly mocked the American tourists on the Florentine streets: See how crude they were! So loud, so monolingual, so *fat*—the type that would ask for ketchup or piss in the bidet.

Also that year—this was a summer semester—were the Los Angeles Olympics. An American housemate of mine was beside herself about these—all that red, white, and blue, and, worst, Reagan, smiling that idiot smile of his, as if he didn't know how contemptible he and his "U.S.A.! U.S.A.!" were. She was especially appalled by Mary Lou Retton, the little ball of fire and joy from West Virginia (perhaps the self-hating American's least favorite state). The ebullient gymnast was becoming America's sweetheart, but she was a demon in that house at 20 Giovanni Bovio Street. My housemate recoiled at the girl's country twang and her equally country first name: "Mary Lou!" the housemate would sing out in mockery, trying to sound like a demented Minnie Pearl. "Mary Lou!"



All the while, I was becoming more and more repulsed by this attitude, and more and more . . . patriotic (though this was considered a horribly anti-intellectual thing to be—the disorder of boobs and know-nothings and losers). I went out of my way to be friendly and helpful to American tourists, whom I found easy to like. Did they want to know where the Ponte Vecchio or Vivoli's was? Did they need help with the menu? It would be my pleasure. To irk my irksome American classmates, I would have donned a pair of Bermuda shorts and a garish floral-print shirt, and thrown a camera around my neck—even chomped on a cigar.

I simply refused to cringe at my countrymen. I sort of willed it. I didn't want to be that kind of traveler, age-old, who fancies himself superior and admirably sophisticated. Listen to Miss Lavish, in Florence, at the beginning of E. M. Forster's *Room with a View*: "Stop a minute [she says to her companion, Lucy]. Let these two people go on, or I shall have to speak to them. I do detest conventional intercourse. Nasty! They are going into the church, too. Oh, the Britisher abroad! . . . Look at their figures! They walk through my [my!] Italy like a pair of cows. It's very naughty of me, but I would like to set an examination paper at Dover, and turn back every tourist who couldn't pass it."

One day, a teacher at the Istituto decided to conduct a little political session. After the usual denunciations of the U.S. and its cowboy president, the teacher turned to me (I must by now have acquired a reputation) and said, "And now, Jay will defend America." I stood up and said, "America, given all that it has done for the world, particularly on this continent, has no need of a defense." Then I sat down. Everyone went "ooh."

I had discovered something wonderful: the World War II card (which can—and should, I believe—double as a World War I card; for that matter, it should triple as a Cold War card). To play it may be a little underhanded, but it can be hard to resist. Don't get me wrong: I didn't expect, or want, anyone in the Old World to throw flowers at my feet, the way they did Woodrow Wilson. (For one thing, I had had nothing whatsoever to do with the achievements of the American army.) But, you know: *un po' di rispetto, eh?* When I need cheering up, I like to think of that glorious moment when Charles de Gaulle told Dean Rusk that he wanted all American troops out of France, pronto. Replied Rusk, "Would that include the ones buried in the military cemeteries, General?" This must be the greatest riposte in American history.

In the fall of '84, after I had gotten home, Vice President Bush debated Geraldine Ferraro—and he said something that sounded strange to many ears, but that was sweet music to mine. He said (speaking of Reagan, of course), "It's a joy to serve with a president who does not apologize for the United States of America." I knew just what he meant. Exactly.

Travel, they say, is broadening. So it is. You are apt to learn as much about your home country, or yourself, as you are about the places of your journey. When I got back from Florence, I was hopelessly in love with that city, and with Italy, longing to return. But, like Norman Pod., I also had a new (or renewed) feeling about America. Burke said that a country, to be loved, ought to be lovely. Okay. There is plenty to love about America and Americans. Even—no, especially—the Mary Lous. **NR**

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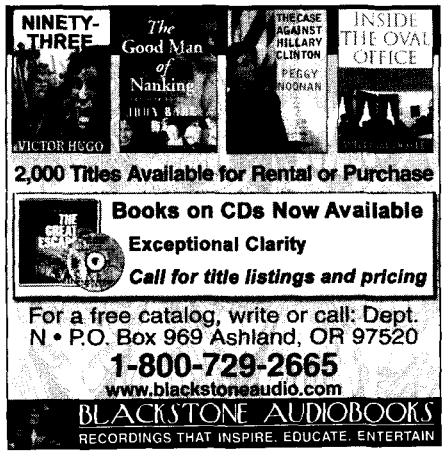
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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Prince Cheney?

NEW YORK, JULY 25

THE last vice president struck by lightning was Lyndon Johnson, before that Harry Truman, before that Calvin Coolidge and Teddy Roosevelt. The sequence is reassuring; i.e., lightning induces a certain savoir faire in the people it hits. Can we ask for anything more? Federally guaranteed lightning?

On that score, the selection of Richard Cheney should meet with pretty general approval. Nobody is *not* going to vote for Bush because of the fearful prospect that Cheney might actually end up in the White House. The concentration is, rather, on whether the mere sound of Bush/Cheney is a more compelling sound than, say, Bush/Ridge or Bush/Keating. Most political analysts would probably tell you that manifestly it doesn't give off as galvanizing a sound as Bush/Powell, or Bush/McCain. Though there are probably 75 Americans left who wouldn't want to risk a black president, and 75 who wouldn't like the McCain they observed in New Hampshire and South Carolina as president.

My own view of it is that any man who is *not* president can't really be thought of as president, because the process of investiture, for understandable psychological reasons, is thought more sacramental than political. I illustrate the point by remembering the morning of November 9, 1960. Scene, Hyannisport, the big summer room at the family compound. One hundred reporters and cameramen are there at 8 A.M., waiting as they had waited day after day, month after month, following around the campaigner and candidate, whom they referred to as Jack. The door opens and—everyone rises silently to his feet. That affable man they had mingled with, written about, played with, was suddenly the Prince.

That can't happen to a vice-presidential candidate. It's different from the royal situation. The cameramen following Prince Charles hither and yon do so because Charles is *going to be* king. That isn't true in republican situations, where the vice president is by no means guaranteed some day to be sovereign. There can only be one king, so that attention inevitably turns to the question: What can the number one figure reasonably do to better his chances? He has to come up with a believable successor, and Bush has done so. There are those who think that his father stretched that challenge when first he came up with Dan Quayle. But if Quayle was indeed a liability, he was a liability Bush had the baggage capacity to handle: He did, after all, become president.

Those who have looked again at Cheney's biography are struck by his very young age when Gerald Ford named him chief of staff at the White House. It is reported that he had there, in the turbulent days following the resignation of Nixon, a steadying effect, both within the White House and on executive–legislative relations. He is a man of peace, which goes well with a sometime secretary of defense. I had a personal experience with him, which brings to mind his gift for avoiding war. At a dinner party I told him of my bright idea and serial frustrations. I thought to do one of the regular two-hour *Firing Line* television debates on the subject, "Resolved: That the U.S. military should exclude women from combat duty," and stage it at West Point. Management said, Negative! So?—I would do it at the Naval Academy. Nix. So at dinner I asked the secretary of defense, would he consider overruling the colonels and commodores? He said quietly, consolingly: Let's go for the Air Force Academy. Months later he had done nothing, and avoided telephone conversations. The debate was held at George Washington University, in the shadow of the Pentagon, but safely removed from it. Mr. Cheney displayed diplomatic skills.

"I know that what I did was wrong, but it doesn't rise to the level of staying in after school."

These he will employ, in the months to come, by self-effacement. This is something vice-presidential candidates regularly do, and Mr. Cheney is by temperament a quiet operator. But there will be one debate between the two men competing for the vice presidency. That night he will find himself pitted against . . . Gephardt? Bradley? Oprah? And he will be up front to speak, as a former secretary of defense, on the question of anti-missile-missile development. He will do well, though not too well—that might dim the spotlight on the Number One man, and Cheney will not forget who that is.

Is *The Patriot* Patriotic?

NEW YORK, JULY 14

THE furor over *The Patriot*, the "patriotic" movie that enshrines honor, family, liberty, gore, and banality, raises yet again the question: What do we know about our birthright, as sons and daughters of the Revolutionary War?

One school of thought, in a comfortable sedentary way, says: Why all the fuss? Everybody knows the "Star-Spangled Banner" version of American history.

These assumptions are not safe, not even professionally. A consequence of holding to that position was drastically suffered by a young columnist in Boston. Conservative Jeff Jacoby, writing his fortnightly column for the *Boston Globe*, filed a piece in which he recounted the future lives of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence: X number imprisoned, Y number killed in action, Z number dispossessed. Most of us first heard about the ill-fated Founders at age six, and again every year or two since then. But lo! Mr. Jacoby neglected to introduce his column on the Founders' fates by acknowledging that it was old stuff—and he got suspended! On hearing this, one had the feeling it would be deceptive to relay in a column the arguments of the *Areopagitica*, without

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first confessing that John Milton had first come up with them.

So then: We have a movie. It is written by Robert Rodat, who gave us *Saving Private Ryan*; and it is directed by Roland Emmerich, who gave us *Independence Day* and *Godzilla*. The hero is Mel Gibson, the villain is Jason Isaacs. The plot is the South Carolina chapter of the Revolutionary War.

The contested parts of the movie have to do with British conduct during the war, and with slavery. Question: Is it believable, let alone true, that British officers would incinerate an entire congregation of men, women, and children trapped in a church during Sunday services? Was the British attitude toward life indistinguishable from that of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union?

David Horowitz, the distinguished author and bellicose critic of wanton anti-Americanism, weighed in heavily on the whole question on his important and lively frontpagemag.com website. He begins by reminding us that the extent of historical ignorance in America is, well, unbelievable. A recent survey of 55 leading colleges and universities reveals that 80 percent of seniors are virtually illiterate in the subject. They could not, for instance, identify Patrick Henry. (If Mr. Jacoby, when he resumes his column, reveals that Patrick Henry was the man who said "Give me liberty or give me death!" he should remember to cite his sources.)

Mr. Horowitz defends persuasively the conviction that the Revolutionary War brought on a crystallization of the ideals of the Founders. By no means complete—the abolition of slavery, the enfranchisement of women were years ahead—but to ignore the war's idealistic contribution to the idea of freedom and equality is greatly to disserve it, as also the sacrifices endured.

Granted that most men of the soil will fight to resist oppressors, whether Americans, Nazis, or Communists, wars can nevertheless be distinguished from the mere genus war when a strategic goal in sight is such as the goals of freedom and liberty enunciated in the Declaration of Independence.

That much being said, the movie itself, as distinguished from the movie's cause, is long, and soupy, the lines uttered, formulaic and unconvincing. One needs to forget that the same author wrote *Private Ryan*—the only alternative is to think that he was tortured, along with everybody else, to produce awful lines. But there are 160 minutes of the movie and they include an absolutely splendid villain (a British colonel), and battle scenes that vividly remind us what war was like, back when Patrick Henry was pleading for liberty, and offering his life in exchange.

Needed from W.: A Fireside Chat

NEW YORK, JULY 18

THE life/choice business really is unique, as witness its distinctive hold on the vice-presidential GOP choice. There are two schools of thought. The one says that George Bush's candidacy becomes incoherent on the matter of life if he picks as his vice president someone who is pro-choice. The other school says that to select a running mate who is for choice acknowledges the division of sentiment among the voters, and in so doing reinforces the eclectic appeal of the candidate. Moreover, it gives off to the critical public the spice of independence, and some people like that and would be attracted to such a man.

There is a point here that needs to be made in an effort (almost certainly vain) to explain in a sentence the moral intensity of the question before the house. Those who believe in abortion rights believe in the right of a woman to extinguish fetal life. Now a belief in that right can be offhanded, and it can be ardent. But in all such cases the right being upheld is in the nature of an accommodation to the mother. She doesn't want a child, so get rid of the fetus. The life people are saying that to get rid of the fetus is a pre-infanticidal act.

Now how do we know whether the life people are "correct"? The answer is that we won't "know" until there is something in the nature of a final historical moral resolution on the question, to be compared with the contemporary creeping resolution that slavery was not just distasteful, but absolutely intolerable. To come to that conclusion took about 30 centuries. The need for understanding in a pluralist society has to do not with whether abortion is a capital wrong, but with the question of how are people who do believe exactly that to coexist with those whose concern is entirely with what they take to be absolute rights of the mother.

The question arises: Are there reasons to suspect that the Catholic politician who believes in choice is taking that position because there is "internal dissent" from the teaching of the Church—or is he temporizing? The Catholic politician who is in favor of choice is hardly a phenomenon in the world of Kennedy, Cuomo, and Moynihan. What the public needs to be reassured about is that accepted political processes aren't going to be violated by a president. Assuming that life were the preeminent concern of President George W. Bush, what would he do about it? He can do pretty much what he wishes, if the Pentagon is his instrument. But he has no power to get in the way of the abortionist. Only the Supreme Court can do that, and Mr. Bush could go no further than to nominate to that Court men or women whose readings of the separation of powers were the same as his own.

Gov. Bush would do everyone a favor if he were to say, even ahead of his actually naming a running mate, that there is no way a Bush administration could get in the way of those who elect abortion, and no way he would consent to do so assuming he had that power. The call for a constitutional amendment in the GOP platform is a platonic will-o'-the-wisp, as meaningful as our coinage's declaration that "In God We Trust." It should be possible to assess the desirability of Gov. Tom Ridge as a vice presidential candidate without reference to his position on abortion, and it would be good to hear exactly that from George W. Bush—even if he did not proceed to designate him.

Gov. Bush is unlikely to fashion definitive moral sensibilities on the matter of abortion, but he could do a lot to engender an understanding of the requirements of a pluralist society. It may be that his advisers are telling him to ease away from critical issues, to satisfy himself with philosophical pleasantries on such matters as immigration and bilingual education and school vouchers; but no question is more polarizing than the division over abortion, and here, especially in the context of his upcoming decision on a running mate, he might significantly instruct the public, as Lincoln so amply did in his pre-presidential life.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

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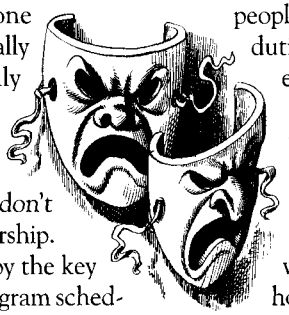
■ THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER ■

FLORENCE KING

By the time you read this, the GOP convention will be under way, but right now I'm getting ready for it. I've already made a run on the liquor store and hidden my guns; now all I have to do is buy a can of something called "DeeStickee," guaranteed to remove all gummy, sugary, syrupy residues, in case I have to wash down the TV.

I'm not looking forward to this. What I'd really like to do is go where no Republican has ever gone before, but they go practically everywhere now. The only way to avoid Republicans these days is to go to the one place where they wouldn't dare set foot, but I don't have a country-club membership.



I can tell what I'm in for by the key words in the convention program schedule. It defies reading; but you don't really have to read it: Just squeeze it and it squirts out enough Renewal, Progress, and Purpose to drown a double stack. It's shaping up like my Christmas visit years ago to the home of a beau made desperate by the strain of living with a repressed, suicidally conventional family who were determined to believe that people wanted to do the right thing, that everybody got along with everybody else, and that nothing was wrong when, in fact, everything was wrong.

Whenever anybody asked his mother what she wanted for Christmas, she smiled brightly and said, "All I want is a big box of love." When she said it for the twentieth time, I got an idea. I told my beau about it, and we drove out to Sears and went around back to the loading dock, where he persuaded them to sell him a crate that had contained a refrigerator. When we got back home, he hid it in the garage, and we went to work on it. When he unveiled it on Christmas morning, his mother took one look at what we intended as gibes—LOVE! THIS END UP! LOVE! POST NO BILLS!—and invited the whole neighborhood over to see the proof of her wonderful boy's dedication to family. "You can't win," he muttered. No, you can't. The world is full of people like this, and most of them are Republicans.

In most election years there's so much competition for the GOP Tunnel Vision Award that it's hard to decide on the winner, but this time it's a snap: Christie Todd Whitman, who allowed herself to be photographed frisking a black criminal suspect. It happened when she went out with the cops, which, said her damage-control people, was one of her gubernatorial duties: getting hands-on experience of the policeman's lot.

That's all cops need, some woman in the back seat chirping, "Ooh, can I do it?" Men welcome this sort of thing only when a woman is under 25 and wants to see what it feels like to hold a boat or a plane on course just for a minute, giving them an excuse to press against her and put their hand on hers to steady it. Substitute a gaunt post-post-deb cruising around Camden in the middle of the night, and instead of a delicious frisson all they get is a shudder.

At least the photo of the smiling white socialite patting down the spread-eagled homeboy will keep Whitman off the ticket and, with luck, send her permanently out to pasture, but it's the top of the ticket that worries me. He's turned into Lyndon Baines Bush.

Instead of throwing money at problems, LBB throws tax credits. His $42 billion "New Prosperity Initiative" would give the "working poor" a tax credit to buy health insurance, but lest anyone call it welfare, the Bush camp insists that "the governor hasn't proposed any wealth transfers," as if the revenue lost in tax credits did not have to be made up for by higher taxes on somebody else.

His New Prosperity Initiative even creates $750 million in tax credits for teachers who use their own money to buy classroom supplies, but none dare call it Great Society II. "The reason you haven't heard any criticizing," said Sen. Rick Santorum, "is because these are tax reductions, not new government programs."

Oh. . . .

Keeping track of LBB's blizzard of billion-dollar initiatives is slow business because so many news stories have to be read twice, like the one about the "American Dream Down Payment Fund," in which LBB proposed a program to give poor people money to put into savings accounts so they can buy a house.

After rereading this to make sure it said what I thought it said, I came across a column by Cal Thomas praising it. "But his objective is not to maintain people in their dependency," Thomas explained. "He wants to emancipate them. It is a subtle but important distinction." It certainly is, and if you reread Thomas you will grasp it: Democrats give people money to spend, but Republicans give them money to save.

The definition of "compassionate conservatism," once so elusive, can now be pinned down: It's new government programs masquerading as tax credits. That won't pour, however, so Republicans at the squeeze-me convention, like my beau's mother and Cal Thomas, will define it as they wish it to be, using great big gobs of emotion and happy talk to sing of the miracles of self-sufficiency that rugged individualism can achieve if you just spread around enough handouts.

Grover Norquist, president of the conservative Americans for Tax Reform, is impatient with complaints such as these. "Look," he said, "the governor is going to spend money. I find nothing troubling about it, and it certainly sounds more cheerful than the Republicans saying they want to abolish the Department of Education."

Norquist the cheerful is obviously looking forward to the convention, and so, in my fashion, am I. I'm hoping LBB will announce a Classroom Compassionate Discipline Initiative so he can screw it up and say, "No child's behind was left."

Meanwhile, I believe in DeeStickee so strongly that I want everybody to have some, especially CNN's Jonathan Karl, who reported that LBB pinched his cheek. I had no sooner read that twice than I came across an item about a brawny ABC cameraman whom LBB greeted with: "Big boy, are you a golfer? You must shank it a mile." I read that three times but it still sounded like Mae West. **NR**

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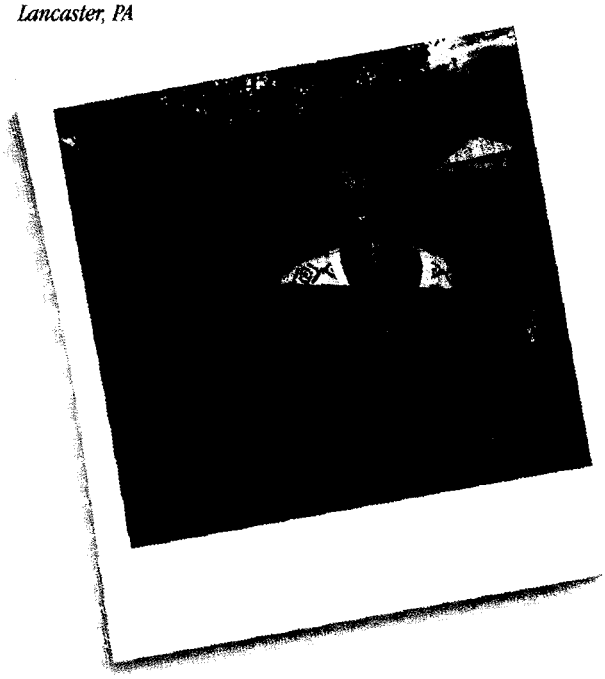

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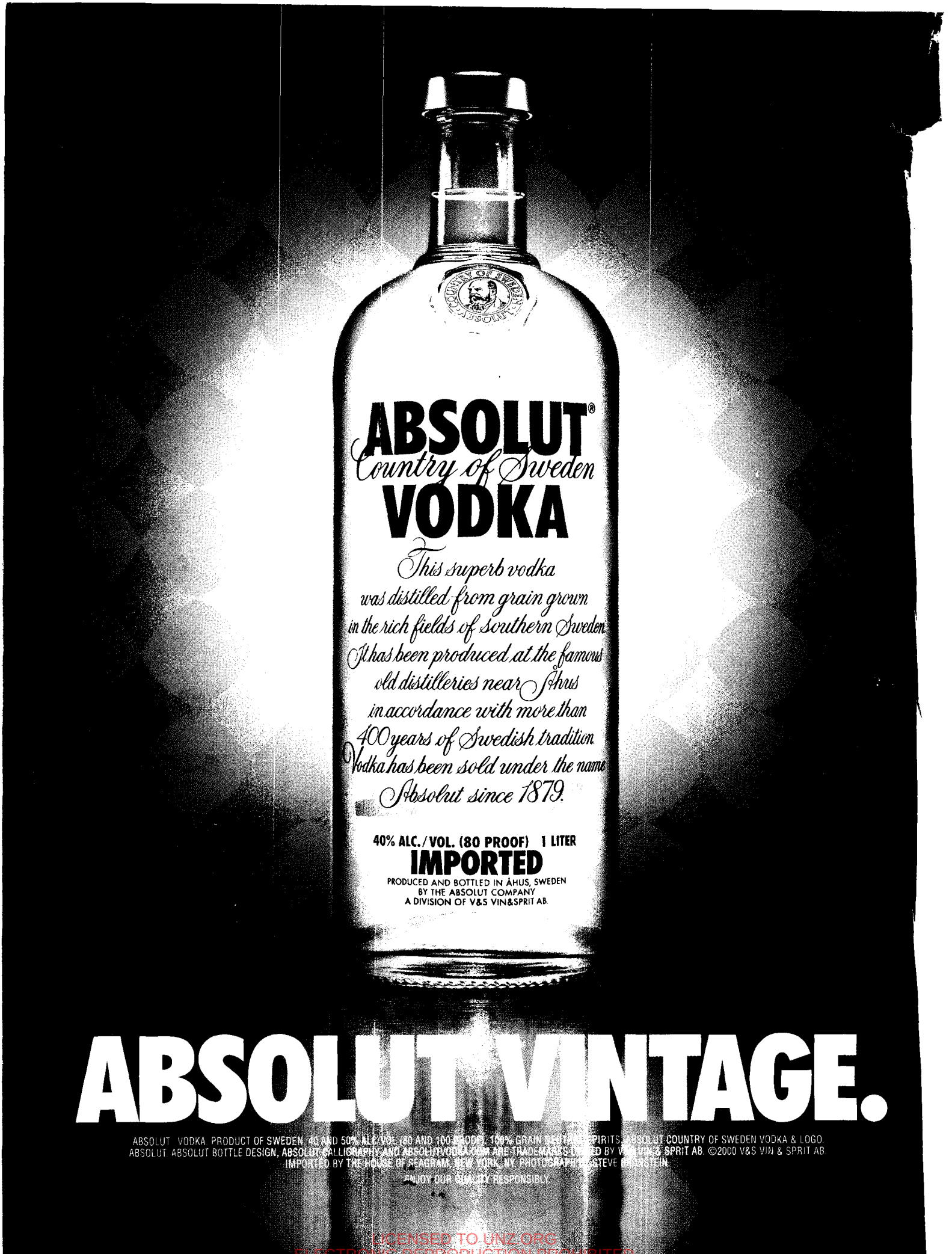
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